

THE INDEPENDENT

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WEATHER: Malahy dry

(IR65p) 60p

How to kiss Felicity Kendal every night: Michael Pennington

the long weekend



Live and kicking: Janet Street-Porter

The eye

Georgia weighs in to make one woman's day



Georgia Denney, born yesterday at Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge, weighing 3.75kg, begins her first full day of life on International Women's Day - a celebration of what women have achieved, writes Kate Watson-Smyth.

But as she lies unaware of the world around her, mil-

lions of women are reminding themselves of their strength and remembering what they have achieved since the dark days of non-suffrage and inequality.

They will celebrate the meaning of womanhood so that one day Georgia too will be able to take her place

in the world as an equal member of society. Mao Tse-tung said that women hold up half the sky. Many would say they keep the world turning as well. Today is a festival where they will pledge to continue fighting for themselves and their children. Photograph: Brian Harris

Peking hit by rush-hour bus blast

Teresa Poole
Peking

An explosion on a bus in one of Peking's major shopping streets during last night's rush hour injured and possibly killed a number of people. Reuters news agency said two people were killed. Police refused to say whether they were investigating a bomb, but the blast came just 10 days after three bombs were planted on buses in the far-western province of Xinjiang, where Muslim separatists have been blamed by the Chinese for a series of attacks over the past year.

By the early hours of this morning, there was still a very heavy police presence on Xidan Street, where debris from the bus could be seen outside one of the big shopping malls. Workers at the Jishuan Hospital said some of the eight injured had burns all over their bodies.

Terrorist attacks in China, or at least those that come to light, are rare. So if Uighur Muslim separatists have started a bombing campaign in China's capital city, the loopholes in China's security system will soon become apparent, even with policing tightened in the wake of the death of Deng Xiaoping. Explosives are easy to come by in a country where there are many private mines and controls can be very lax.

9,000 years on, Cheddar Man meets the relatives

Charles Arthur
Science Editor

Adrian Targett visited the home of a close relative yesterday. He had to put on Wellington boots because the floor is muddy. The relative wasn't in. Hardly surprising: he died 9,000 years ago.

But there's no doubt: Mr Targett, a 42-year-old history teacher in Cheddar, Somerset, has been shown by DNA tests to be a direct descendant, by his mother's line, of "Cheddar Man", the oldest complete skeleton ever found in Britain, and now also the world's most distant confirmed relative.

Even the Royal Family can only trace its heritage back to King Egbert, who ruled from 829AD to 830AD. By contrast, Cheddar Man, a hunter-gatherer who predated the arrival of farming, lived in 7,150BC.

The news caught everyone by surprise. Mr Targett's wife, Catherine, said: "This is a bit of a surprise, but maybe this explains why he likes his steaks rare".

The discovery came about during tests performed as part of a TV series on archaeology in Somerset, *Once Upon a Time in the West*, to be shown later this year. DNA found in the pulp cavity of one of Cheddar Man's molar teeth was tested at Ox-



The generation game: Adrian Targett (above right, and as a baby with his mother, right) has been shown by DNA tests to be descended from Cheddar Man (left)



Photographs: SWNS

ford University's Institute of Molecular Medicine, and then compared with that of 20 people locally, whose families were known to have been living in the area for some generations. To make up the numbers, Mr

Targett, an only child who has no children, joined in. But the match was unequivocal: the two men have a common maternal ancestor. The mitochondrial DNA, which is inherited from the egg, con-

firmed it. "I'm absolutely overwhelmed," said Mr Targett, on hearing of the match. "It is very strange news to receive. I'm not sure how I feel at the moment." His pupils were delighted

"He has never had a nickname ... until now," said one 16-year-old with relish) and so are scientists. The finding could provide a key to the debate about the process by which early humans settled down to an agricultural life.

Cheddar Man was discovered in 1903, 20 metres inside Gough's Cave, which is the largest of 100 caverns in Cheddar Gorge - Britain's prime site for Palaeolithic human remains. He had been buried alone in a chamber near the mouth of a deep cave, about 1,000 years before hunter-gathering began to give way to farming.

At the site, Mr Targett said: "I'm glad I don't live down here - it's very dark, dank and dismal. I have been down here before but I never dreamed I was in my ancestor's home."

Dr Larry Barham, an archaeology lecturer at Bristol University, said: "There is debate over whether farmers arrived from Eastern Europe and ousted hunter-gatherers - or whether the idea of farming spread through the population. This discovery strongly suggests an element of the second."

Physically, Cheddar Man would have looked like modern man. "You could put a suit on him and he wouldn't look out of place in an office," Dr Barham added.

QUICKLY

Care failure

A schizophrenic who killed his stepfather and left his mother for dead had been failed by care professionals in a "fundamen-

tal and depressing" way according to one of the most damning reports ever produced by an inquiry into a care-in-the-community killing. Page 8



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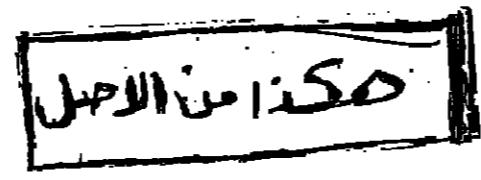
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2 news

significant shorts

Hunt goes on for thief who stole Picasso at gunpoint

The hunt continued yesterday for the armed robber, described by police as "audacious and dangerous", who stole a £600,000 Picasso painting from a central London gallery.

Police praised a taxi driver hijacked by the thief to help in his escape with the stolen painting on Thursday.

A man, armed with a sawn-off shotgun, walked into the Lefevre Gallery in Bruton Street and took 35 seconds to rip Pablo Picasso's *Tête de Femme* from the wall before fleeing to Wimbledon in south-west London.

A photograph from the gallery's surveillance camera was released yesterday. Interpol, art experts and galleries around the world have been alerted to the theft.

Jason Bennett

Alcoholic ice lollies recalled

Kwik Save supermarket chain yesterday ordered the recall of a faulty batch of ice lollipops which ferment into alcohol, after a mother gave them to her two young children.

The supermarket chain has cleared Froszy icepops from its shelves after fears that children around the country could have eaten them. The product, made by Magna confectioners in Shropshire, was made with a faulty recipe, which meant the lollies contained 5 per cent alcohol.

Lynne Bradburn of Manchester gave the icepops to her children aged four and six, before discovering that they tasted like gin.

Attempt to solve 'Derbyshire' riddle

The final part of the expedition to try to solve the mystery of the largest British merchant ship ever lost at sea will start this weekend, it was announced yesterday.

The UK-EEC funded expedition will spend 47 days on the wreckage site of the *MV Derbyshire* which went down in a typhoon off Japan in 1980 with the loss of all 44 people on board. Concerns about structural failure on the 169,000-tonne Teesside-built carrier led to a union-sponsored expedition examining the wreck in 1994. Their findings resulted in this official expedition being mounted, the results of which could be known later this year.

The United States research vessel, *Thomas G Thompson*, was due to leave Guam, in the Pacific, today to travel to the wreckage site more than 400 miles off Okinawa. The survey team are equipped to obtain complete Sonar and photographic coverage of the wreckage field. An official inquiry into the disaster in 1987 said the weather was probably to blame. But families of the crew, trade unions and shipping experts have long argued that the disaster was caused by structural defects in the vessel.

Fewer strip searches for McAliskey

Roisin McAliskey, the pregnant 25-year-old being held on remand in connection with the IRA mortar attack on a British army barracks at Osnabrück, Germany, last year, has had her prison category reduced.

Ms McAliskey, left, daughter of the former nationalist MP Bernadette Devlin, was previously a Category A high-risk prisoner in Holloway Prison, north London, which meant she was strip-

searched before and after prison visits. Yesterday, the Prison Service reduced her classification to Category A standard-risk which means she will be strip-searched less often and will be allowed access to a dress-making craft shop in the prison.

A spokesman for the Prison Service said she would now be subject only to random strip-searching or when "under suspicion".

He said the decision was made by a group of "fairly senior members of the Prison Service" including Alan Walker, director of operation for the south region, whose beat includes Holloway.

Ms McAliskey is due to give birth in May. Matthew Brace

Drug dealer tortured woman rival

A member of a violent drugs gang was yesterday found guilty of kidnapping and imprisoning a rival woman drug-dealer who suffered a 72-hour ordeal which included a mock execution.

The 27-year-old was stripped and repeatedly tortured with electric shocks. She was also beaten, her long hair was hacked off, and she was threatened with scalding water and told her fingers would be amputated. The woman, who was repeatedly told she was going to be killed, was only freed after frantic relatives raised a £9,000 ransom. At one point, the gang leader, Barclay Walters, pulled out a gun, loaded it with a single round, held it to her temple and pulled the trigger.

She eventually recovered physically, but would remain mentally scarred for life. Knightsbridge Crown Court was told.

Manjeet Gill, of Esher, Surrey, was convicted of kidnapping and conspiring falsely to imprison the woman. He was cleared of conspiracy to blackmail and possessing a firearm.

Gill, 32, had denied all the charges. He will be sentenced on 30 March with Apurodh Sharma, 32, who was found guilty of conspiracy falsely to imprison, after earlier owning up to the blackmail plot. Dippy Sharma, 26, was convicted of both the false imprisonment and blackmail conspiracies. Her disc-jockey husband Sanjeev Sharma, 28, and Walters, 38, had admitted both charges, as well as a firearms possession offence.

Bee colonies ravaged by disease

The whole of England and Wales has been declared a statutory infected area after the government and beekeepers failed to halt the spread of a devastating disease among bees.

The varroa disease, a mite infestation of bees first found in Britain in 1992, has already ravaged bee colonies in the south-east and has spread as far as the Scottish borders, as well as throughout Wales.

The statutory infected area was yesterday widened by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food to include Greater Manchester, Lancashire, Cumbria and Northumbria.

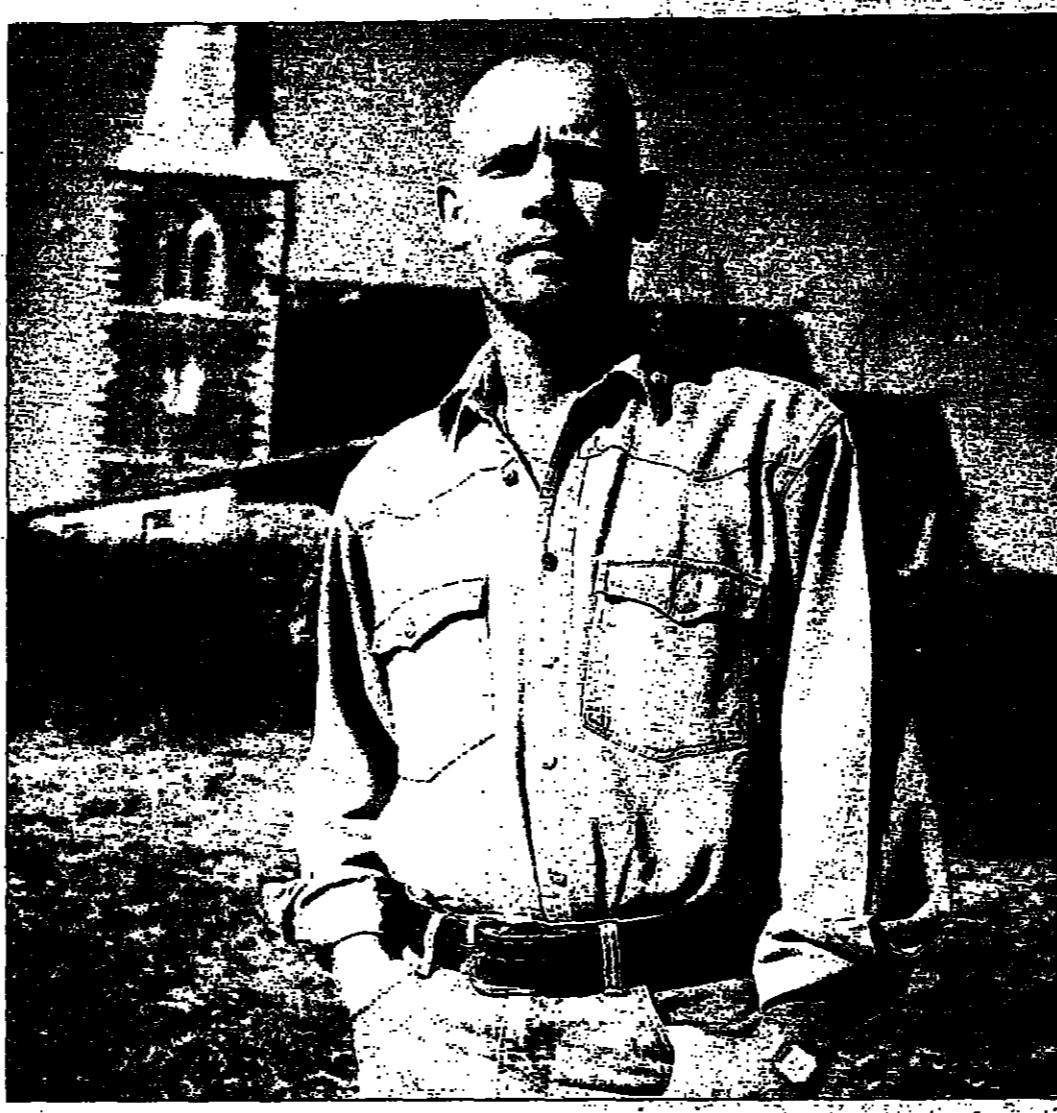
The designation makes the movement of bees into and out of the infected area prohibited except under licence.

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people



Billy Wright: The public face of a militant paramilitary loyalist movement

Death threat puts Ulster's King Rat behind bars

Billy Wright, who as "King Rat" has been the most public face of militant loyalist extremism in Northern Ireland, was yesterday jailed for eight years for threatening to kill a woman.

The judge described the 36-year-old as a sinister man whose threats in August 1995, had "perfected" the woman. She was a key witness in the case, and has now left Northern Ireland. She lives under police protection at a secret address in England.

Wright's high public profile and fearsome reputation made him into both an icon of loyalist paramilitarism and a target for numerous IRA attempts on his life. He also had to contend with close RUC attentions which led him to lodge frequent complaints about "police harassment".

Last year he fell foul of his own organisation, the illegal Ulster Volunteer Force, which publicly announced that he would be killed if he did not leave Northern Ireland. Such a range of enemies led a senior police officer to say last summer: "It's really a question of who gets to him first - the IRA, the UVF or us."

The sentence shows that the rats were won by the authorities. Passing judgment, Lord Justice McCollum described him as an inscrutable witness whose evidence was not capable of belief, while the woman witness had been honest, reliable and accurate.

Outside court, one of Wright's friends said: "It's an absolute disgrace. The judgment was completely political."

Wright featured prominently in last year's Orange march stand-off at Drumcree, not far from his home, where it was said he had planned an assault on police lines using an armoured bulldozer. The Ulster Unionist Party leader, David Trimble, was criticised for meeting him during the confrontation, but responded by saying he had been working to avoid violence.

His brushes with the law go back at least until 1987, when he was charged with the murder of a Catholic. That case collapsed, but he later spent several years in jail for possession of a gun. Unusually for a loyalist paramilitary, he went through a religious phase during which he became a tey preacher.

David McKittrick, Belfast

Life's a drag for pleasure-loving Japanese PM

Japan's Prime Minister, Ryutaro Hashimoto, is a man renowned for his love of physical pleasure. As a mountaineer, he has scaled Japan's highest and most challenging peaks. He is a black belt in kendo, the vigorous martial art of fencing with wooden staves. A few years ago, a tabloid magazine ran an interview with one of his former mistresses, who praised him for his skill and sensitivity as a lover.

But now, Mr Hashimoto has got into trouble. Yesterday five plaintiffs from the city of Nagoya filed a legal suit claiming that the Prime Minister is in daily violation of Japan's constitution for his enthusiastic cigarette habit.

Compared to other industrialised countries, Japan is a smoker's Eden. On every street corner there is a vending machine dispensing multiple cigarette brands for 220 yen (£1.10) a packet. Television advertisements routinely show sports people finishing off their swimming or skiing routines with a hearty fag.

Like millions of his countrymen

Mr Hashimoto sees no shame in his addiction. In remarks cited by the plaintiffs he says: "I will smoke as much as possible." To the Nagoya Five, however, these words are incendiary. They cite Article 25 of the constitution, which states: "All people shall have the right to minimum standards of wholesome and cultured living."

They believe, obliges prime ministers to abstain from smoking.

As well as 110,000 yen in damages, they are demanding that Mr Hashimoto give up for the duration of his premiership.

Richard Lloyd Parry, Tokyo

Marvin speaks of son's lonely death

The former Shadows guitarist, Hank Marvin, talked yesterday for the first time about the lonely death of his alcoholic son, Dean Marvin, 35, who died on 6 January in a London YMCA hostel, had reportedly not seen his father for 10 years.

Dean became estranged from his father, a Jehovah's Witness, before Hank went to live in Australia with his second wife.

Speaking on the *This Morning* TV show, Hank Marvin said: "He wanted to lead a life with no responsibility where he could drink. If I'd provided finance for him, it would have simply gone on drugs or alcohol. He was an adult. He made a lot of wrong decisions, it's really sad, but that killed him."

"Initially it was a shock and the grief is taking a while to work through but we had no idea of his condition. We knew he was drinking and taking drugs but I didn't realise he was an alcoholic. My daughter told me afterwards he had been in a bad way for 18 months."

"He got involved with people we were unhappy with and warned him against."

Italian outrage over double surrogacy

In an unusual case of surrogate motherhood, an Italian woman is pregnant with the babies of two different couples. The 35-year-old woman, who is three-months pregnant, offered to carry both foetuses when she learned her doctor was having trouble finding surrogate mothers. *Corriere della Sera* reported yesterday.

To circumvent Italian medical rules designed to prevent surrogacy, the procedure was carried out in Switzerland, where the woman also plans to give birth. After their birth, the babies will be matched to the right parents through a blood test.

The Italian media identified the woman only as Angela, a mother of two living in Rome. In an interview

with the *Turin newspaper La Stampa*, the woman said she was receiving only expenses.

Health minister Rosy Bindi said the case had: "brought us to limits never before crossed" and called for a law to regulate surrogate motherhood.

Dr Aldo Pagni, head of the Italian physicians association, said disciplinary action should be brought against the doctor responsible for the treatment.

Father Gino Concetti, a Roman Catholic moral theologian, whose views are close to those of Pope John Paul, said the pregnancy was "a new step towards madness". The Catholic Church opposes all forms of artificial human conception, including test-tube fertilisation and surrogacy. AP/Reuters, Rome

briefing

TECHNOLOGY

Catalytic converter will be cheaper and cleaner

Scientists have developed a catalytic converter which would be cheaper to manufacture and more efficient in controlling exhaust emissions, they announced yesterday. Existing converters used by vehicle manufacturers all use platinum and rhodium. The new design, developed at Dundee University, replaces these precious metals with a cheaper mixture of palladium and zinc.

The university has patented its development and is now in discussions with component manufacturers around the world after presenting their breakthrough to the Society of Automobile Engineers in Detroit. They are seeking to strike a deal with a manufacturer who would test the new design and ensure that it could perform for at least 100,000 miles.

The catalyst is the invention of Professor James Cairns of the university's department of applied physics and electronic and mechanical engineering, and Dr James Thomson, lecturer in the department of chemistry. They have been working on the project for the past 11 months, after stumbling on the basic premise almost by chance.

WHITEHALL

Open government a myth

Public bodies are failing to meet Government guidelines on openness, a survey showed yesterday. More than a quarter of organisations contacted fell short of the standards enshrined in their published commitments to open government.

According to the *Press Gazette* survey, 50 government departments and quangos were asked for information, which the public is entitled to under the *Code of Practice on Access to Government Information*.

But results showed only 11 departments replied "quickly and willingly", 25 responded only "adequately", some giving information after being prompted to reply, and 11 failed to comply with the code by providing "wrong or inadequate" information. Some did not give any information in their responses and three refused to reply at all.

The *Code of Practice* was introduced in 1994 when the Government resisted calls for a Freedom of Information Act.

Press Gazette reported that those organisations which showed good practice included the Foreign Office, the Department of Environment, Ofcom and the Department of Trade and Industry.



HEALTH

Clouds over sunshine in a bottle

Prozac, the anti-depressive drug often described as "sunshine in a bottle", can take its toll on users' sex lives, research published in the US has claimed. The downside to taking Prozac and other SSRIs (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors) can be a dramatic loss of libido, say the authors of a study published in *Primary Psychiatry*.

Conventional medical wisdom has long held that users of SSRIs are less prone to side-effects than those who use other forms of anti-depressants. But the US researchers say that between 40 and 50 per cent of those taking Prozac and similar anti-depressants, including Zoloft, Paxil, and Luvox, suffer from some sort of sexual dysfunction. "It is now a truth generally acknowledged that SSRIs cause sexual dysfunction more than any other class of anti-depressants," they write.

SSRIs are used by millions around the world. More than 12 million prescriptions are written for them each year in Britain alone.

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news

Your local, friendly bobbies on the beat ...

Yard launches inquiry after unauthorised publication of "intimidating" photographs

Jason Bonetto
Crime Correspondent

Scotland Yard has launched an internal inquiry into the publication of a photograph showing an armed police boat patrol which critics have condemned as "macho posturing" and deliberately intimidating.

The photograph of a new maritime unit includes six specialist firearms officers clad in goggles and helmets totting automatic machine guns. None of the armed officers are members of the unit. It was taken on behalf of the boat squad and published on the front page of a yesterday's *Police Review* magazine.

Senior officers at the Metropolitan Police, including Sir Paul Condon, the Commissioner, are understood to be extremely angry about the publication, which was not authorised by the Scotland Yard headquarters. They believe it gives a false and damaging impression of the Metropolitan Police.

But a monitoring group and a London MP last night accused Scotland Yard of macho behaviour and said the picture created an image of a police state.

The photograph was used to illustrate a feature about the four-man unit based on the River Thames. Officers have specialist training in the use of rigid inflatable boats, surveillance and abseiling.

Part of the force's Thames division, the Wapping-based team, will be employed on normal river-based policing activities, such as search and rescue operations, but will have an additional role transporting and assisting officers from other specialist units, training regularly with the force's SO19 firearms teams.

Insp Michael Burke, head of the Maritime Special Operations team, wrote an article for the magazine and according to Scotland Yard provided the photographs.

The internal inquiry will examine why police headquarters was not informed about the article or the contents of the photograph, which are seen as damaging to the force's image.

A spokesman said: "There are a lot of questions to be asked. The image of the Metropolitan police is of police officers in helmets walking the beat."

But Tony Banks, Labour MP for Newham North West, said: "Gradually we are slipping into a police state where officers with visible guns is becoming the norm."

"I find it very scary and totally unnecessary to have this kind of macho posturing."

Gilly Mundy, project worker of the Newham Monitoring Project, a police monitoring group in London, added: "Either this is a bad PR mistake or the police are deliberately using this image to intimidate people".



River watch: The controversial front cover of the 'Police Review' magazine showing London's river police dressed in what look like paramilitary uniforms

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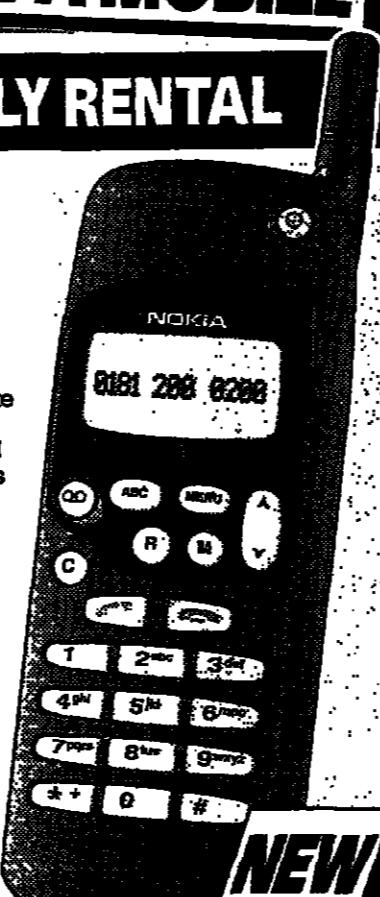
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There's a great deal going on

HIV doctor put 1,700 women patients at risk

Annabel Ferriman

More than 1,700 women may have been exposed to the risk of HIV infection from a junior doctor working in obstetrics and gynaecology from February 1991 until January this year.

The doctor, who worked at four hospitals in Essex, East London and Gloucestershire, discovered their HIV status in February and notified the hospitals concerned. The sex of the doctor has not been revealed.

Four health authorities – Redbridge and Waltham Forest, South Essex, Barking and Havering and Gloucestershire – trawled the records of 50,000 women patients over the past two weeks and found that 1,752 women may have been exposed during a variety of operations. Yesterday, they sent out letters by courier to all the women involved, offering them advice, counselling and HIV testing, if appropriate.

Dr Georgia Duckworth, Regional Epidemiologist for North Thames, said: "Women will be

concerned to hear this news, but I do want to say to them that the risk of infection really is very small. We are contacting patients who have had what are known as 'exposure-prone procedures' such as major gynaecological operations like hysterectomies or Caesarian deliveries, but on the evidence of previous exercises we would not expect to find any cases of the infection having been passed on.

Parents do not need to be concerned about risks to babies born in any of the hospitals.

The hospitals and periods during which the doctor was employed are: Gloucestershire Royal, Gloucester (February 1991 to October 1993); King George, Redbridge (August 1993 to February 1995); Whips Cross, Waltham Forest (March 1995 to February 1996 and April 1996 to January 1997) and Southend (March 1996 to October 1996). Duplication of dates is due to part-time work.

There have only been two reported incidents where HIV-infected health care workers have

transmitted the virus to patients. One, the case of the Florida dentist, involved transmission to six patients, and a recent report of a French orthopaedic surgeon involved transmission to one patient.

Around the world retrospective studies of more than 22,000 patients of HIV-infected health care workers have failed to show any evidence of transmission. There have been six retrospective exercises in the UK, involving about 4,500 patients, and none of those tested was found to be infected.

Dr Noel Gill, consultant epidemiologist at the Public Health Laboratory Services said: "Although the risk is small, it is too early to stop undertaking notifications in cases like this."

A helpline for patients from the London and Essex areas has been established on 0800 146 271. Patients from Gloucestershire can ring 0800 146 091. General information about HIV infection and AIDS can be obtained from the National AIDS Helpline on 0800 567 123.

Lang to face court challenge over arms deals

Patricia Wynn Davies
Legal Affairs Editor

Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, is to face the first legal challenge over licensing the export of UK-manufactured armoured vehicles and water cannon to the repressive regime in Indonesia.

Tapol (the Indonesian Human Rights Campaign), the Campaign Against Arms Trade and the World Development Movement have photographic evidence and video evidence that says proves that the British government is breaking its own policies on arms export and human rights by giving the go-ahead to the exports.

The Department of Trade and Industry disclosed on 9 December last year that it had issued licences to the Coventry-based firm Alvis for 50 Scorpion armoured vehicles and to Procurement Services International Limited for a variety of police vehicles, including water cannon. It was revealed in a parliamentary answer on 23 January that the latter licence covers more than 300 armoured vehicles made by Southampton-based Glover Webb.

A letter last month from the

organisations' solicitor, Stephen Gross, to Mr Lang highlighted an incident in April, when the Indonesian army used British-made armoured vehicles to disperse a student demonstration. Three students were killed.

In June, security forces sprayed liquid from a British-manufactured armoured vehicle during a pro-democracy demonstration. Mr Gross has been advised that the chemical is likely to have been CS gas.

Government policy, set out in a consultative document following the Scott arms-for-Iraq inquiry, is "to avoid contributing to internal repression and instability [and] ... to avoid contributing to human rights abuses." Jeremy Hanley, the Foreign Office Minister of State, said in an answer last October that the use of water cannon to stop peaceful demonstrations was "totally unacceptable" adding, "It is totally unacceptable to use chemicals or dyes with the water cannon."

The three organisations gave Mr Lang a month to avoid the prospect of legal action by agreeing to withdraw the licences. The deadline expired at 5pm yesterday and the groups will apply for a judicial review.

Peugeot workers in Coventry are protesting about longer shifts and an alleged refusal by management to negotiate seriously over pay.

Unrest in car industry escalates

Barrie Clement
Labour Editor

The threat of damaging pre-election walk-outs in the motor industry grew yesterday as Rover workers began voting in a strike ballot and union officials warned of the "inevability" of an all-out stoppage at Peugeot.

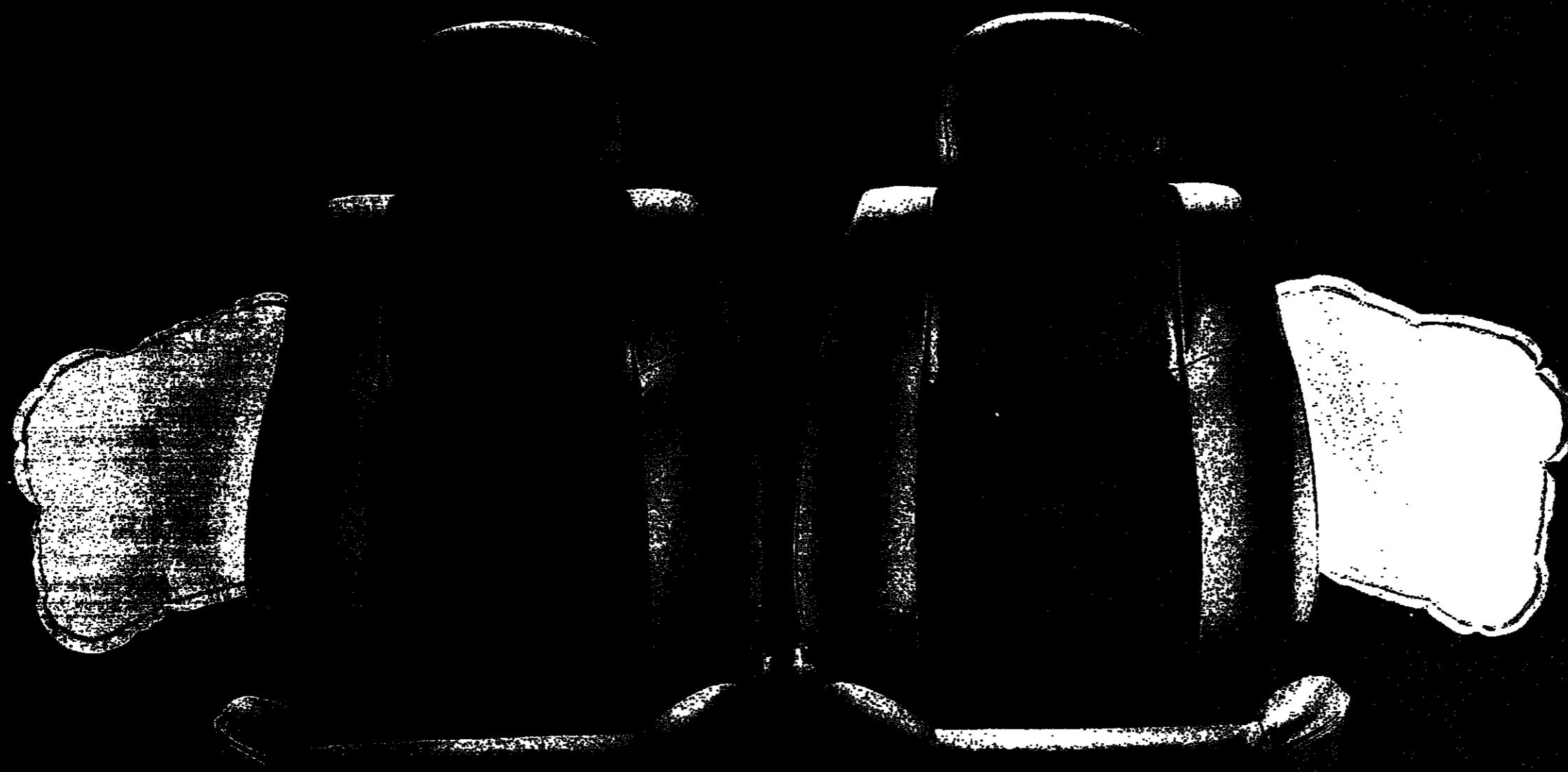
At Rover's Longbridge plant 2,000 workers have been told a plan to invest £1bn at the complex could be withdrawn if they take industrial action. Against union advice, employees who make the 400-series cars sought and won a strike ballot in protest at plans to change shift patterns. Labour Party leaders are keeping an eye on unrest in the industry for fear of the Tories making capital of it.

Rover workers voted against the shift changes last year in a ballot held by the company but now management insists the new arrangements go ahead. Rover says the system, which will mean lower pay, is needed because too many vehicles are being produced.

Peugeot workers in Coventry are protesting about longer shifts and an alleged refusal by management to negotiate seriously over pay.

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Public health: Outbreaks of sickness pinned on poor cleanliness as more hit by water bug

Hygiene attack on Scottish abattoirs

Charles Arthur
Science Editor

Abattoir hygiene will be "vigorously criticised" in the imminent report on last November's *E. coli* 0157 outbreak in Lanarkshire, which killed 18 people. *The Independent* has learnt.

A senior Scottish health scientist who has provided key data to help track down the source of the contamination said that the forthcoming report will "deal with abattoir hygiene very vigorously", and added: "If hygiene standards in abattoirs were satisfactory, then you wouldn't get *E. coli* outbreaks."

The comments by Bill Reilly, assistant director of the Scottish Centre for Infection and Environmental Health in Glasgow, will add weight to those who suspect that lives might have been saved if a controversial report, *Red Meat*, on hygiene standards in British abattoirs had not been suppressed and watered down by the Government.

Meanwhile, John Major, continued to try and damp down the internal Whitehall row over the suppression of the report by saying that it was "incredulous" to suggest that senior ministers were at each other's throats over the fact that the Scottish Office had said it only received a copy of the full report on Thursday.

The first, 54-page version was finished on 14 December 1995, and contained numerous criticisms and evaluations of abattoirs' practices. A final 28-page version was issued in June 1996 to selected food industry organisations, but never officially referred to in any public government document.

Professor Hugh Pennington, who is working on a final report into the Lanarkshire *E. coli* outbreak, which centred on a single butcher's shop, also said yesterday that it was now "very important" that he was given the earlier draft reports of the Meat Hygiene Service's survey of abattoirs.

"I have only seen the final report, which one might have to say, has an element of sanitisation about it," he said. "It doesn't have raw data or numbers or percentages—it has given rather general descriptions."

The Scottish Office said that Professor Pennington would be given full access to the reports.

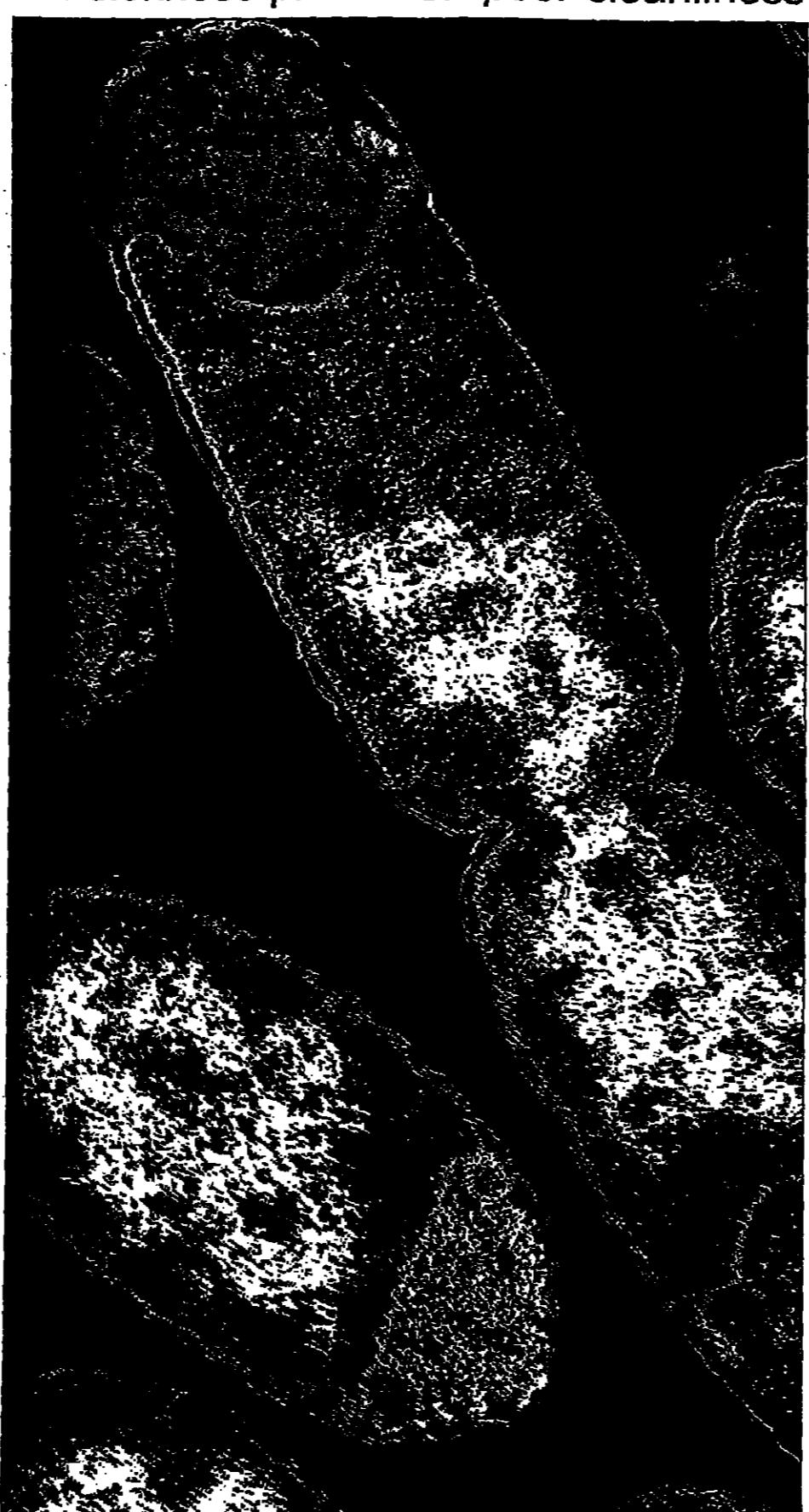
Mr Reilly, who has not yet seen the report, insisted that improving hygiene standards could have an immediate effect on preventing wide-scale *E. coli* infection. "When we have outbreaks, as opposed to sporadic cases, meat features in it," he said. "If the initial vehicle of infection was raw meat, it's possible that the abattoir would be the source."

But it can take two to three weeks for people to become ill from abattoir-infected meat—by which time no trace may remain at the source.

The Lanarkshire outbreak was the second worst case of *E. coli* poisoning in the world. An outbreak in Canada killed 19 pensioners in a nursing home in 1985.

Michael Forsyth, Secretary of State for Scotland, showed his displeasure over the affair when he told BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme that he would have liked to have seen the report.

In the Commons on Thursday, Mr Major told Tony Blair that there were "huge numbers of such working documents every year. If they all came to ministers for ministers to read every one, nothing else would be done."



A microscopic view of the *E. coli* bacterium.

Water alert leaves four in hospital

Nicole Veash

Four elderly people are being treated in hospital after drinking water contaminated with the microscopic parasite *Cryptosporidium*, six days after warning notices were issued to nearly a million people.

More than a hundred people are now suffering severe stomach sickness and diarrhoea, in one of the worst outbreaks of water-borne infection to hit the South-east in the past five years. But sources investigating the crisis say they are now hoping a "plateau effect" will kick in and reduce the number of cases presently rising daily.

French-owned Three Valleys Water issued a "boil water" warning to homes in west Hertfordshire, north-west London and Bedfordshire, after a number of people contracted *Cryptosporidiosis*.

The infection, which causes severe diarrhoea lasting up to three weeks, is potentially fatal for children and people with deficient immune systems, such as the elderly.

A spokesman for Bedfordshire Health Authority said: "We decided to hospitalise four elderly people because we are aware that the illness can cause severe distress and possible death in the weak and frail."

"However, I am pleased to

say that the four are currently in a stable condition and responding well to treatment."

Cryptosporidium, which has between a seven and 10-day incubation period, causes 4,000 cases in Britain each year. Belonging to a group of protozoa, it occurs naturally in the dung of farm animals, which can be washed from agricultural land into nearby rivers.

It is normally spread through contaminated water or contact with an infected person, but unpasteurised milk and offal also carry risks.

Frank Fitzpatrick, communication manager for Three Valleys, said: "We are leaving no stone unturned in order to find the origin of this problem, if indeed it is related to the water supply."

The company—which is currently spending £40,000 a day on increased sampling—is supplying local schools and hospitals with bottled water.

Independent inspectors from the Government Drinking Water are carrying a detailed investigation into the outbreak.

If they decide the company has been negligent in its treatment of the water supply then Three Valleys may face prosecution and the prospect of paying thousands of pounds in compensation.

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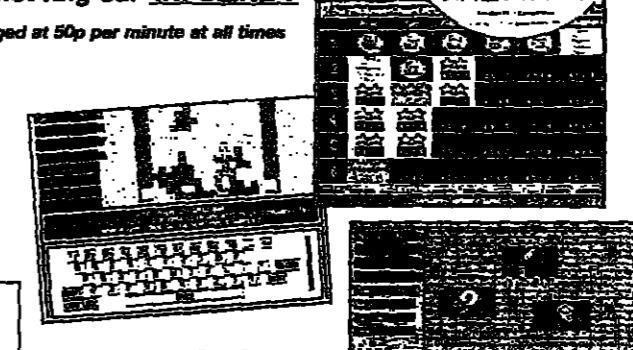
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THE UNEXPLAINED OFFER

Schizophrenia crisis: Council blamed over care in the community killer as school attacker is sentenced



Martin Mursell: Inquiry said 'his treatment was very lacking ... They let him down'

Professional failures that led to a family tragedy

Glenda Cooper
Social Affairs Correspondent

A schizophrenic who killed his stepfather and left his mother for dead had been failed by care professionals in a "fundamental and depressing" way.

In one of the most damning reports ever into a case in the community killing, an inquiry team listed a catalogue of failures both on a human and organisational level which led to a near-double tragedy.

Martin Mursell, cared for by Camden and Islington Health Authority and Islington social services, attempted to kill his mother Mary Collins and fatally stabbed his stepfather, Joe Collins, in a frenzied attack.

Mursell, 28, was jailed for life last year at the Old Bailey. He is now in Rampton hospital in Nottinghamshire.



Mary Collins: Her husband Joseph was killed by her son

I lost my husband and I lost my son. It is not enough to say that no one can be held responsible

The incident took place in October 1994, eight months after Camden and Islington reported on Christopher Clunis, who killed Jonathan Zito. "It saddens me to say the lessons

are not being learnt at all," said the chairman of the inquiry, Lincoln Crawford QC. "Since Clunis one would have expected by now people would be more diligent".

And despite internal inquiries by both health and social services no disciplinary action has yet been taken against any member of staff.

Mursell, a diagnosed paranoid schizophrenic with a history of violence, had been hospitalised six times but on the last time his discharge was "woefully inadequate", the report said. He had referred himself to the Whittington Hospital, north London, but after two weeks was told to leave because the doctors said they could not see any psychotic symptoms.

While cared for in the community, housing, social services and health agencies "didn't seem to be talking to each other", said Mr Crawford. Mursell had officially getting accommodation, moving in between bed and breakfasts and his mother's home, and for long periods he did not even have an allocated social worker.

When he did have a social worker it was one who was not trained to deal with mental health. The inquiry was "struck by the inexperience" of staff and a supervisor said the case was "too much for [her] to handle".

Mursell's mother, Mrs Collins, repeatedly asked for help but her comments "fell on deaf ears" and she was left bearing the brunt of the re-

sponsibility. The inquiry concluded: "Despite Mrs Collins's cry for help when she telephoned the duty social worker, very little notice was given to her concerns."

"His treatment was very lacking," said Mr Crawford. "The failures were fundamental and depressing. It was in my view a failure by all the professionals involved with Martin Mursell. They let him down."

The chairwoman of Camden and Islington Health Authority, Sylvia Denman, said yesterday she had not ruled out the possibility of resigning but there had been a full-scale overhaul of care of the mentally ill over the last two years.

The social services staff who cared for Mursell had all left the borough as had most of the health team. No disciplinary action had been taken but both departments promised a review in the light of the report.

Mrs Collins said she was angry no one had been made responsible: "They say it's shortage of beds or underfunding which is true but I came across people who just didn't care ... I lost my husband and I lost my son. It is not enough to say that no one can be held responsible ... You can't make decisions and walk away from them and make people suffer."



Reunited: Lisa Potts with the children she helped save

Machete man sent to secure mental hospital

Horrett Campbell, a paranoid schizophrenic, was sent to a secure mental hospital for an indefinite period yesterday for his horrific machete attack in an infant school playground.

Mr Justice Sedley passed sentence on Campbell, 33, at Teesside Crown Court after he was found guilty of seven counts of attempted murder during a Teddy Bear picnic at St Luke's School in Wolverhampton, last July.

Yesterday's proceedings followed the trial at Stafford Crown Court in December when the jury heard how Campbell, obsessed with Thomas Hamilton, the Dunblane mass killer, walked to the school near his home in the Villiers House tower block armed with a machete.

His first victim was Wendy Wilkinson, 29, then he struck out at two other mothers, Azra Rafiq and Surinder Chopra, also both 29. Finally he attacked Ahmed Malek, three, and Rhema Chopra and Francesca Quinlivan, both four, and also severely injured Lisa Potts, a 21-year-old nursery nurse as she tried to protect the children.

Mr Justice Sedley, after hearing a psychiatric report that Campbell was suffering from severe schizophrenia, said it was accepted his mental illness led to him carrying out "these dreadful crimes".

In some ways it is a relief to know it is a profoundly sick and deluded individual who committed these offences. To believe such an act could be carried out by a sane person would shake belief in humanity."

The judge said anyone hearing the proceedings would realise Campbell was "deranged". The attack stemmed from his delusion that the children were talking about him as he passed the school and that their mothers had given information to the police about him.



Horrett Campbell: Paranoid

he saw himself being treated for so long by local people".

He said Campbell was a great danger to the public and may never recover from his illness.

The judge said that nursery nurse Lisa Potts, who suffered serious injury while trying to protect the children in her charge, should receive a bravery award for her actions. "It is beyond doubt she deserves some public recognition."

Miss Potts, who was not in court yesterday, later described the sentence as the "end of a nightmare".

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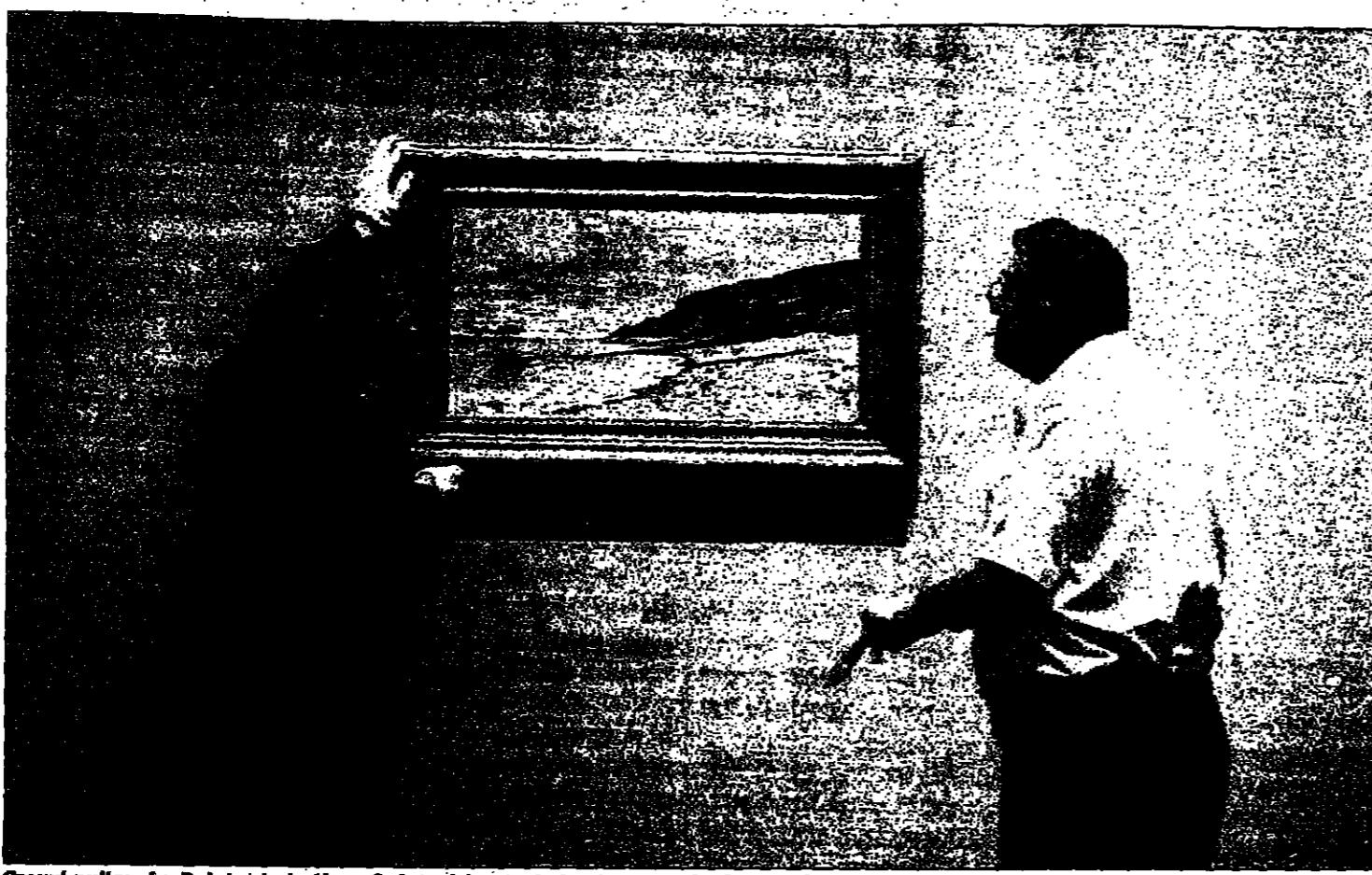
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KELVINATOR KCD121

Crowd-puller: *Le Pointe de la Heve Sainte-Adresse* being hung at the National Gallery for the Monet exhibition. Photograph: John Voo

Teacher jailed for 20 years of abuse

A senior social services manager was yesterday jailed for 18 years after being convicted of 15 sexual assaults against children in care.

Judge Huw Daniel told Keith Laverack it was the most serious case of its kind that he could remember and would cause public outrage.

The 52-year-old had denied 20 charges of sexually assaulting youngsters during a career of more than 20 years as a teacher and headmaster at children's homes in Cheshire and Cambridgeshire.

But the jury of eight women and four men at Chester Crown Court found him guilty of 15 of the charges – 11 of buggery and four of indecent assault.

Laverack stood with his head bowed in the dock as the judge passed sentence, many of his victims listening behind him in the packed public gallery.

The judge told him: "None of those young children you buggered consented to what happened to them. They were raped, many of them, by you with violence and force."

He said there was little else they could do, and they were intimidated by what happened to them. "They had to live with it for years, locking it away, trying not to think of the appalling things you did to them."

You made them go through the ordeal of having to recall what happened to them and suffer what many of them regard as public humiliation by having to go through the whole thing in public in giving evidence.

You abused your position of power, the position of trust in which you were, in the worst possible way.

Hume warns of cloning danger

Paul Vallely

Modern society has become "morally desensitised" and is ill-equipped to handle the ethical issues thrown up by the cloning of Dolly the sheep, Cardinal Basil Hume, leader of the Catholic Church in England, said yesterday.

The Archbishop of Westminster was speaking after a scientist who cloned a sheep told a House of Commons select committee it would be possible to clone a human being in "one or two years".

"We must act with extreme caution, for bringing new life into the world is the nearest human beings come to creation," the Cardinal said, in an address to governors of independent schools in London yesterday. "We tread on hallowed ground."

The great tragedy of modern civilisation is that material progress has failed to satisfy elemental human needs. "Our society has become, in some respects, morally desensitised, and is therefore ill-prepared to grapple with a looming issue which I have no doubt is fast

"You took advantage of damaged children to satisfy what can only be described as your perverted lust, when you knew that what these children wanted was love, affection and security."

Judge Daniel added: "You buggered them at every opportunity that presented itself."

"You were confident you could get away with it because the system allowed you to get away with it and encouraged the silence of these children by threats and sweet talk, confident in the knowledge that if these children did complain, they would not be believed."

Laverack had behaved in this way in three separate establishments, abusing both boys and girls, the judge said.

It is worthy of note that your career of paedophilia started the moment you became a master, the first permanent appointment you had at Greystoke Heath [approved school in Warrington, Cheshire] at the age of 21 or 22 and believed that way until 1987 thereafter – a period in excess of 20 years."

The judge said there had to be a deterrent element so that all who had charge of the very young, and particularly the vulnerable would understand that such behaviour would not be tolerated.

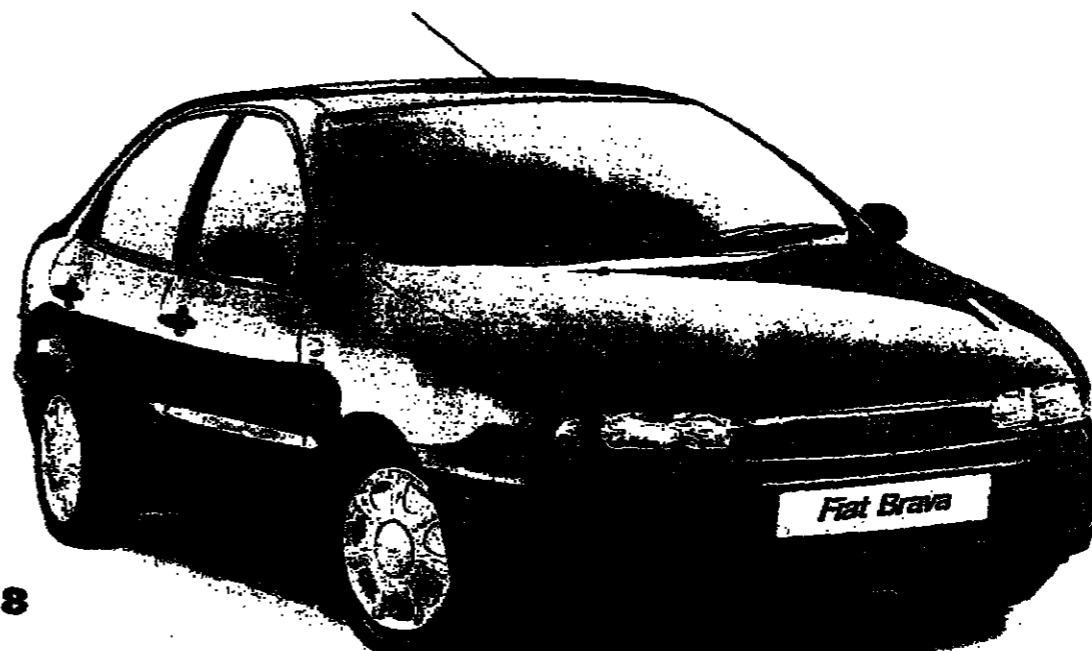
The judge said there had been three distinct periods of abuse at the three different children's homes and there had to be consecutive jail sentences of six years on the buggery charges relating to each home.

As the judge ordered Laverack to be taken down to the cells to begin his sentence there was spontaneous applause from his watching victims.

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■ 8 programmes.

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Microwave

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Microwave

700 watts

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Model: EM1515Z.

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11lb Reverse Action Tumble Dryer

■ 2 heat settings

■ Final cool tumble

■ 2 wash programmes

■ 32kg load capacity

Model: D32A3V.

Price Excluding

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SALE PRICE HELD

WHITE KNIGHT

11lb Reverse Action Tumble Dryer

■ 2 heat settings

Judges declare court fee hike a bar to justice

Patricia Wynn Davies
Legal Affairs Editor

Access to the courts is a constitutional right which cannot be overridden by the government without the clearest possible sanction by Parliament, two judges declared yesterday in a crushing judgment against the Lord Chancellor, Lord Mackay of Clashfern.

The ruling – in the first ever contested judicial review to succeed against a Lord Chancellor – declared illegal part of swinging increases in court “entrance” fees. The decision leaves in disarray the new regulations introduced in January by Lord Mackay.

Lord Justice Rose and Mr Justice Laws upheld a test complaint by John Witham, a former businessman, now dependent on benefit, that the Lord Chancellor had acted beyond his powers by abolishing an exemption from fees for people on income support and the right of others on low incomes to apply for reductions.

Mr Witham, 50, from Essex, could not afford the new £500 fee to issue a High Court writ to bring an action for libel against an insurance company, but he got legal aid to pursue the judicial review.

The judgment is as much an indictment of the Treasury as of the Lord Chancellor. The new regulations raised the High Court fee from £120 and introduced rises of between 50 and 150 per cent in other civil proceedings, in line with gov-

ernment policy to make the courts self-financing. Lord Mackay made the new rules under section 13 of the 1981 Supreme Court Act, but Mr Justice Laws said the effect was to “bar absolutely” many people from seeking justice from the courts in a wide-ranging variety of situations, including debt and housing cases.

“Access to the courts is a constitutional right,” he said. “It can only be denied by the government if it persuades Parliament to pass legislation which specifically – in effect by express provision – permits the executive to turn people away from the courts.”

Leave to appeal was refused, which means Lord Mackay would have to apply to the Court of Appeal if he wants to contest the decision. Unless he does so successfully, the ruling has the effect of reinstating the protections for people on low incomes.

Mr Witham said: “Thank God we live in this country and are subject to the laws of this country.”

The ruling was hailed by legal rights groups and the Law Society, who called on Lord Mackay to bring back the exemptions in the county as well as the higher courts.

Vicki Chapman, policy officer for the Legal Action Group, which supplied evidence on hardship cases to the judges, said: “This judgement is a devastating blow to the Lord Chancellor. Justice which is available only to those who can afford substan-



Green and pleasant lands: Duffryn Gardens, which are to be restored to their original Edwardian glory thanks to a £3,255,800 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The grounds, the finest surviving work of Thomas Mawson, cover 55 acres in the Vale of Glamorgan, Wales

Photograph: Gareth Everett



The 200-year-old map of Eigg whose ownership is disputed

Islanders' fear as mystery buyer enters Eigg race

Kate Watson-Smyth

The long-running battle for ownership of the Isle of Eigg took another turn yesterday as residents, who want to buy the tiny island, discovered they are facing competition from a rival bidder.

News of the mystery buyer came as islanders fought to stave off an attempt by a previous owner to remove a 200-year-old map from the island.

It is the second time they have tried to buy the Scottish island which has been up for sale since last summer. Their first bid in November was rejected but they have since “significantly increased” their first offer of £1.4m.

The island, which has only 63 inhabitants, was put on the market last summer by the German artist Martin Eckhard Maruma, for £2m. He bought it in 1995 from Keith Schellenberg, a Yorkshire businessman.

Despite the fact that Mr Schellenberg left the island more than two years ago residents are still fighting to stop him removing a priceless map of the island which has been there for 200 years. He tried to take the map with him when he left, but furious islanders barricaded the craft shop where the map was awaiting transportation to the mainland, and “inadvertently” left it behind.

Undeterred, he took out a court action to establish ownership of the map. Mr Maruma claims there was a gentleman’s agreement between the two men that the map and other documents belong to the owner and should not be removed from the island. But when the

case came to court last month Mr Maruma did not turn up and Mr Schellenberg was able to lay legal claim to it.

The map is now in the hands of Eigg’s special police constable, Colin Carr. Chief Inspector John McPaduan, of Fort William police, said the court had ordered the map to be handed over to Mr Schellenberg as the legal owner. “We are trying to comply with that order but we are having certain logistical problems,” he said.

Maggie Fyffe, secretary of the Isle of Eigg Heritage Trust, which is trying to buy the island in partnership with the Highland Council and Scottish Wildlife Trust, said the map belonged on the island.

“It would be blatant asset-stripping of the worst kind if something as important as the map, which is part of Eigg’s heritage, leaves the island,” she said.

The island has changed hands many times in the two centuries which have intervened but not one owner has tried to take it with them so what gives Keith Schellenberg the right?

But even if they manage to fight off Mr Schellenberg the islanders are worried about the island passing into the hands of another wealthy but absent landowner. The mystery buyer is rumoured to be a semi-retired farmer and property dealer, Graham Mellstrom, from Hampshire. Mr Mellstrom is currently in Germany and could not be contacted.

His son, Stephen, said he could not confirm whether his father had put in a bid. “I know nothing about his plans,” he said. “He keeps that side of his life very much to himself.”

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Total amount payable	£11,277.70 £11,538.84
Term (months)	25 25
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*Manufacturer's Recommended Retail Price including VAT at 17.5% at time of going to press. **Estimated on the road price is based on Manufacturer's Recommended Retail Price and £665.00 estimated on-the-road costs covering delivery to the dealer, 18 months road fund licence, estimated cost of fuel and number plates. *Total charges for Credit includes an administration fee of £55.00 (includes VAT), payable with the first monthly payment. **Further charges may be made subject to mileage and condition if the vehicle is returned at the end of the finance agreement. When quotations are available on request from Ford Credit Europe plc, PO Box 46, Brentwood, Essex CM13 3AR. Guarantees and indemnities may be required. Finance is provided subject to status to over 18s only. Certain categories of business users are ineligible. Subject to availability. Available on vehicles registered between February 14, 1997 and May 31, 1997.

news

Lib Democrats in push to win women's vote

Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

The Liberal Democrats will become the latest political party to make a concerted push for the women's vote today.

Their spring conference coincides with International Women's Day and they will seize on this fact to highlight pro-women policies on health and education.

Shirley Williams, the party's most well-known female politician, will use this weekend's gathering in Cardiff as a launch pad for a high-profile election effort which will aim to win over female voters. Baroness Williams is expected to appear frequently for the party during the campaign, taking a major national role and making a number of media appearances.

Diana Maddock, who speaks for the parliamentary party on women's issues, claimed at a rally last night that it could make the face of Westminster more women-friendly.

"It is time we stopped having more MPs called John than

women MPs," she said. The Liberal Democrats would be "more geared towards co-operation in finding solutions to the key issues than confrontation."

In a debate on health today, the party's health spokesman, Simon Hughes, will claim it is committed to promoting equal treatment of the sexes within the health service, which is primarily used by women.

The Liberal Democrats would require hospitals to publish details of diagnoses and treatments by gender so that discrepancies can be identified and tackled, he will say.

In addition, the party would ask GPs' surgeries and other health facilities to operate flexible opening hours so that they would be more accessible to women, and would set targets to make it easier for women to consult female doctors and other health professionals.

Mr Hughes will also spell out a six-point "challenge" to the other parties on health, asking them to halt closures, invest in staff, set a six-month maximum for waiting lists, restore free

"I can hear Labour's campaign song now. It's *Hello Dolly*," he said.

... while the party's leader looks to the future for his support



Political lesson: The Liberal Democrat's leader Paddy Ashdown with pupils at Trefonnen primary school in Llandrindod Wells yesterday on the eve of the party's spring conference in Cardiff

Photograph: Andrew Buurman

Subaru

3

Monte Carlo Rally
Swedish Rally
Safari Rally

Rest of the World

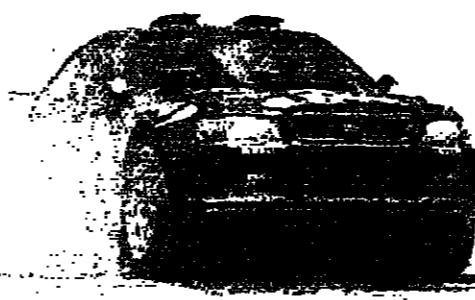
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Blair will not take victory for granted

Tony Blair, the Labour leader, yesterday described himself as "the eternal warrior against complacency" and warned that even if Labour won the general election there would be "no victory dances".

In a firm slap-down to MPs such as Robin Cook, the party's foreign affairs spokesman, who earlier this week predicted a "landslide" victory for Labour at the general election, Mr Blair said he was taking nothing for granted.

Mr Blair told Labour's Scottish conference in Inverness that last week's by-election in Wirral South was a historic win for Labour.

But he stressed: "A by-election is still a by-election. A general election is still to come, and there is only one opinion poll that matters and that is the one on election day.

"I am and remain the eternal warrior against complacency. We are doing well but we take nothing for granted," he said.

Mr Blair's words will also be seen as a warning for his party not to get carried away by opinion polls such as the Gallup Poll yesterday in the *Daily Telegraph* which put the Tories an unprecedented 26 points behind Labour with less than two months to go to polling day.

Mr Blair said: "From now until the day of decision comes, we carry on as we have been doing, patiently, sensibly, building up trust with the British people with responsibility and humility.

"Even if we win, there will be no victory dances. For then, the

hard work in serving our country begins in earnest."

Addressing Labour's last major political event in Scotland before the election, Mr Blair renewed his pledge that if his party won the general election a Labour government would legislate in its first year for a Scottish Parliament.

"We will hold a referendum as soon as possible after coming to office. I will be here campaigning for a 'yes' vote in that referendum. There will be two questions. I will be campaigning for two 'yes' answers," he said.

Labour plans to ask the Scottish people two questions in a plebiscite - first whether they want a Scottish Parliament and second whether it should have tax-raising powers.

Earlier yesterday Alex Salmond, the Scottish National Party leader, renewed his call for such a referendum to include his favoured option of full-blown independence.

But Mr Blair rounded on the SNP, accusing them of sitting on the fence for failing to say whether they would support a 'yes' campaign.

Mr Blair also announced plans to free up an extra £30m for patient care in Scotland.

He said George Robertson, Labour's spokesman on Scottish affairs, had come up with a plan to cut the number of NHS trusts in Scotland from 45 to 25.

"With our other savings it will mean £30m more for patient care in Scotland," he said.

Mr Blair also renewed his pledge to end the "scandal" of hereditary peers.

Labour backers target phone-ins

Kate Watson-Smyth

Members of a Labour Party support group are targeting television and radio phone-in programmes in a concerted effort to marshal support in the run-up to the election.

The *Independent* has obtained a copy of a memo listing all the programmes which members of the Labour Industry Finance Group have been asked to call to back the party's manifesto publicly.

However, the memo urges them not to appear "too partisan" when making their calls.

"The key to success with all phone-in and audience participation programmes is get questions in early, and don't appear too partisan when speaking to the producer," it says.

Under the rallying cry "A Campaigning Election Call" the memo urges supporters to air their views on as many programmes as possible. "We are uniquely placed as party members in business to grasp the opportunity, rather than leave the foxes and others to make a business case for the return of their chosen party," it says.

"Below is a list of national programming - tune in and air your views".

They are asked to ring BBC1's *Question Time* programme and "cross swords with the panel" as well as a range of television and radio programmes including Radio 4's *Feedback* and *Any Answers* programme and Channel 4's *Right to Reply*.

At the end of the memo is a list of numbers to call in case of a complaint about a programme "because you thought it was unbalanced, biased or inaccurate, or missed the point".

The support group is made up of businessmen and authors who have a special interest in transport. No one was available for comment yesterday. But a spokesman for Gordon Brown's office said the group "supports Labour and comes up with initiatives".

The latest "initiative" did not seem to concern the Labour Party greatly. "It's nothing to do with us," said a spokesman.

A spokesman for Radio 4 said that all callers are asked if they have any political affiliations or interests when they ring in. "We try to avoid having a constant stream of lobbyists phoning in and on the whole they are an honest bunch, but we do try to weed them out as early as possible," he said.

مكتبة من الأصل

Looted arms fortify rebels' fighting spirit

Emma Daly
Vlora.

It might be art, a monumental modern metal sculpture, but is the handwork of the unknown agents who torched an armoury containing at least half a dozen anti-aircraft guns and hundreds of army helmets. The skeletal barrels of the anti-aircraft guns point up through what was the roof as smoke eddies from timbers still burning in the military barracks in Vlora.

People living near the complex, which was trashed by leaders of the revolt in southern Albania, are said to have moved out for the moment; the building next door is filled with tons of ammunition. Green boxes are piled up to the ceiling, and the floor is littered with hand grenades, mortar bombs, and artillery and tank shells.

We scurry back shrieking "No!" as our guide picks up a rocket-propelled grenade and waves it around proudly.

Another room is filled with anti-tank mines, while the debris outside includes ammunition belts, training rifles and gas masks. A captain in the Albanian army surveys the scene and removes the RPG from our

over-enthusiastic guide. He says about 50 of the 200 soldiers stationed here have abandoned the government in favour of the "people".

One is Major Dalip Done. "We are not against the people, we are against the government," he says, making no mention of President Sali Berisha's offer of an amnesty to those who lay down their weapons. "Everyone here has arms, and we are all ready to fight."

The people of Vlora, along with their compatriots in a large chunk of southern Albania, were first roused to anger when the pyramid schemes run by allies of President Berisha collapsed, swallowing their life-savings. They wanted their money back but Mr Berisha ordered the police to crack down on the anti-pyramid protests, which fired the crowds' anger.

Yesterday, protesters in Vlora organised the printing of leaflets in Albanian and English which they thrust at the foreign press and which seemed to be the closest thing to an official reaction.

"Berisha go away! You are crazy. People will win against you. You can't kill the heroic people of Vlora. We want new elections," the leaflets read. But it is by no means certain that a political solution other than the resignation of Mr Berisha, will enable Tirana to restore order. "In Vlora, people are fighting the government, but not because they want to make a government," said Geni, a young man passing an anti-Berisha rally in Vlora.

The protests do not seem to have thrown up any political leaders and the doings of the opposition leaders in Tirana do not seem to weigh heavily on the people of the rebellious coast. It is difficult to see Mr Berisha resolving the situation by talking or by shooting.

The problem would be finding any "rebels" to negotiate with. There are no organised structures. "In Vlora there are two factors: the criminals and the average people. The criminals are doing the looting and the average people don't like that. But when it comes to the police and the authorities, they are united," said an outsider who has lived in the town for years. They all hate Mr Berisha.

The military prospects are worse, even without the international opprobrium an assault

Berisha faces new demands

Tirana (AP) — Armed protesters holding several southern towns and opposition politicians in Tirana both issued new demands a day after an agreement in which President Sali Berisha agreed to a 48-hour halt in offensive military operations.

European diplomats who met Mr Berisha said he refused to consider elections any time soon, or allowing Socialists — the former communists — into the government.

Rene Van der Linden, deputy chief of the Council of Europe from The Netherlands, said of a meeting with Berisha: "Firstly, he underlined the necessity to continue political dialogue. Secondly, he wants to use only peaceful means. A coalition with the Socialist Party is not accepted, and, in the short term, there's no room for new elections."

Belgrade students force rector to quit

Tony Barber
Europe Editor

Serbian students celebrated victory yesterday after the diehard pro-government rector of Belgrade University resigned in response to more than 100 days of student boycotts and street protests. Dragutin Velickovic, who was appointed by the Socialist government of President Slobodan Milosevic, announced his resignation as part of a deal under which the students agreed to return to their classes.

It was the Socialist authorities' second major concession to their political opponents this year. Last month, after weeks of daily pro-democracy demonstrations across Serbia, Mr Milosevic finally recognised opposition victories in last November's municipal elections in Belgrade and other cities.

For the students, the resignation of their despised rector was so important a demand that they continued their protests even after the authorities acknowledged the opposition election successes. Mr Velickovic resisted almost to the end, vowing last Tuesday that he

would seek the dismissal of all the university deans who had supported the students' call for his removal.

It is possible that there is more to the rector's resignation than meets the eye. His departure from office must be approved on 20 March by the Belgrade University council, but that body is packed with pro-Socialist stalwarts.

In the weeks leading up to his resignation, Mr Velickovic was the butt of several student stunts designed to ridicule him in the public eye. Playing on the fact that he was generally keeping a low profile, students went peering through telescopes in the city's observatory in case he was in outer space; and fished for him in the Sava river using a red Socialist Party card as bait.

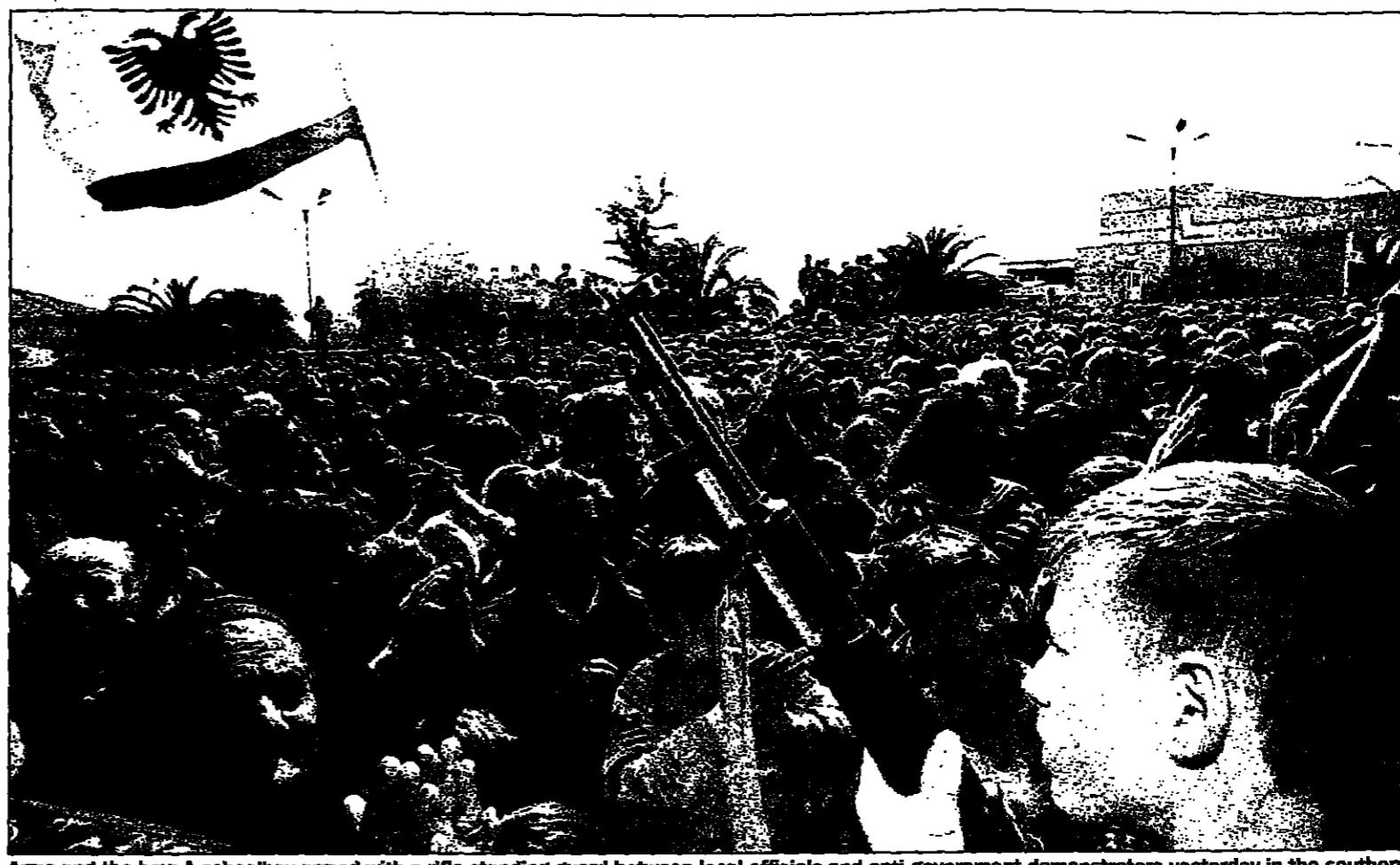
Despite their concessions over the election results and the rector, the ruling Socialists have continued to harry the opposition on other fronts. Last Thursday the pro-Milosevic state television and radio network said it would stop helping an independent station, BK Television, to broadcast programmes outside Belgrade.

BK is owned by one of Mr Milosevic's political critics and has reported extensively on the anti-government protests of recent months. By limiting its broadcasts to Belgrade, Mr Milosevic seems intent on preventing the opposition's views from attracting an audience in rural areas of Serbia where he still retains public support.

The opposition coalition movement, Zajedno (Together), said it would hold a rally tomorrow (Sunday) and dedicate it to the struggle for media freedom in Serbia.



Dragutin Velickovic: Kept a low profile during campaign



Arms and the boy: A schoolboy armed with a rifle stands guard between local officials and anti-government demonstrators yesterday in the southern port of Sarande, where thousands of people have risen up against Sali Berisha and seized an array of weapons. Photograph: Yannis Behrakis/Reuters

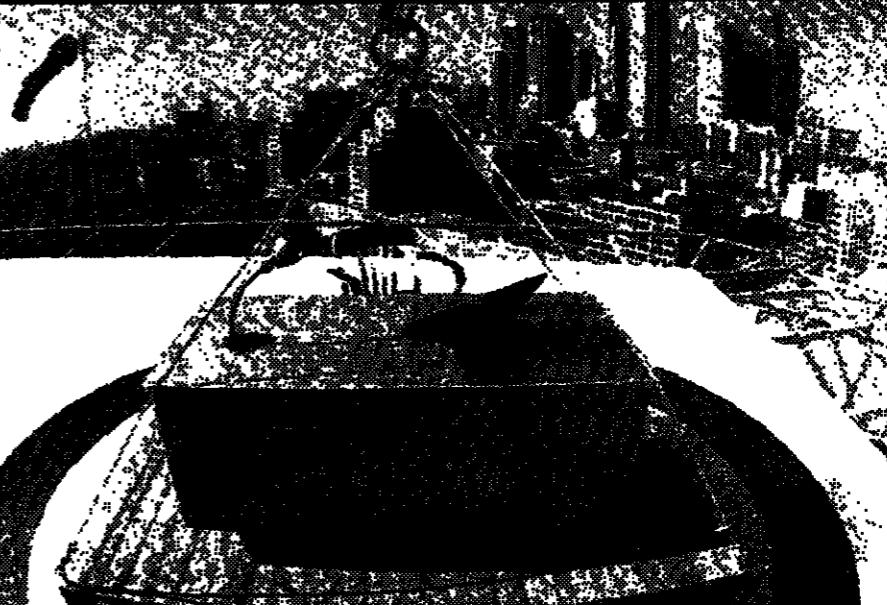
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14 international

Har Homa lays foundations for new violence

Patrick Cockburn
Har Homa

"I own land near here and I think that if the Israelis build a settlement at Har Homa they will confiscate it as well," said Emily Richmawi, an elderly Palestinian woman, as she clutched her banner during a demonstration below the pine-covered hill in south Jerusalem where Israel plans to build a settlement for 26,000 Jews.

Israeli riflemen in purple berets lay spread-eagled on the rocks overlooking the road down which 1,000 Palestinians were trying to reach Har Homa.

Mrs Richmawi explained that her life had got worse since the Oslo agreement was signed. Not only had confiscations continued, but "we even need a permit to get into Jerusalem".

Despite Palestinian anger over Har Homa, known to Palestinians as Jabal Abu Ghneim, Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, was clearly eager yesterday to avoid violence.

Middle-aged men in green and white baseball caps, members of the Palestinian Preventive Security Service, mingled with

the crowd, pushing back anybody who looked like a potential stone-thrower.

There may not be many more peaceful demonstrations at Har Homa. "People don't think they can stop the settlement being built," said Osama Zarour, a Canadian Palestinian, as he watched the rally with his two-and-a-half year old daughter, Yasmin, perched on his shoulders. "But once the bulldozers start moving there will be trouble. We have to do something."

Getting publicity isn't enough.

For the moment, publicity is what Mr Arafat is after. Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, has lost much of the international credibility he gained after he agreed to a partial Israeli withdrawal from Hebron in January. The Palestinian leader received a notably sympathetic reception during his four-day visit to the US.

Har Homa is overshadowing the decision by the Israeli cabinet yesterday to withdraw from a further 9 per cent of the West Bank. Agreement was reached after a prolonged session in the early hours of yesterday morning by a vote of 10 to seven between

ministers. The most important change is that 7 per cent of so-called area "B", where Israel has security control, but Palestinians have civilian authority, will join area "A", where Palestinians have total control. There will be no more withdrawals by the middle of next year.

The West Bank will remain

a jigsaw puzzle with Palestinians in control of the towns, but not of their hinterland. Israeli troops will leave villages like Halhoul with a population of 25,000 north of Hebron. But the areas of Palestinian control remain cantons which Israeli forces can easily isolate. More than a million West Bank Palestinians cannot visit their main population and commercial centre which is East Jerusalem.

In persuading the cabinet to support him yesterday Mr Netanyahu is reported to have said:

"The Americans are pressuring me. We have no choice."

As a result, part of the extreme right opposed to Oslo blames the US for what it sees as a retreat from the dream of the Land of Israel stretching from the Mediterranean to the Jordan. A sign of this anger was a fierce clash this week between Martin Indyk, the US ambassador, who is Jewish, and Rehavam Zeevi, a member of the Knesset and leader of the far-right party Moledet.

The argument began when Mr Zeevi called Mr Indyk "a kike" (Canadian slang for a Jew) two weeks ago. Mr Indyk complained and at a ceremony this week went up to Mr Zeevi

and said: "The last time somebody called me a kike was when I was a 15-year-old and I punched him in the face." To this Mr Zeevi said: "Well try it. Let's see you. You're a kike." Mr Indyk said: "You're a disgrace to your people." Mr Zeevi said: "You're a son of a bitch."

The US is annoyed with Mr Netanyahu over Har Homa and his announcement that four Palestinian offices are to be closed in Jerusalem. Nahum Barnea, the Israeli columnist, says the US views the closure of the offices as "proof of Netanyahu's chronic weakness – to stray from essential matters and consummate his addiction for public relations stunts." In this case, one of the offices to

be closed as part of Mr Arafat's Palestinian Authority – the Islamic Committee for the Struggle Against Settlements – turns out not to be an office but a filing cabinet. The committee has not met for eight months.

Mr Netanyahu says if he is squeezed too hard by the right he will form a National Unity government with Labour. This could happen. The Prime Minister does not have to stand for re-election for three-and-a-half years. But his popularity is low. An opinion poll shows that at present he would get 21 per cent of the vote if he stood against the most likely candidates. But Labour is itself deeply divided and still led by Shimon Peres, defeated Mr Netanyahu last year.



Faith and steel: An Israeli soldier standing guard as Palestinians pray during a protest against a new Jewish settlement at Har Homa. Photograph: AP

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Accidental killer is latest Chinese hero

Teresa Poole
Peking

For more than three decades, every Chinese schoolchild has been brought up to "Learn from Lei Feng", the young soldier whose overwhelming desire to be a "useless screw in the machine of the revolution" was cruelly cut short at the age of 22. But it is only this week that generations have discovered the unlikely details of his death – as featured in the first blockbuster propaganda film to hit China in the post-Deng era, *The Days After I Left Lei Feng*.

A snappier title would have been, *How I Accidentally Killed China's Greatest Model Worker*. But this is not a film which has to worry about box-office sales. Since its release last week, the edict has gone out from the central government to "organise youngsters and adolescents in primary and middle schools, colleges, enterprises, government offices and army units to watch the film". Discussion groups and essays will "help the youth understand the importance of advocating Lei Feng's spirit under new historical conditions".

Until now, the official version of Soldier Lei's demise was a vague description about how a telegraph pole fell on his head. The new version is even sadder. A summary of the early plot might go as follows: the hapless Qiao Anshan, a soldier colleague of our model hero, shows considerable tolerance for Mr Lei's attempts to make him give up smoking, even when he forces him to drive a truck over his last cigarettes. Mr Lei then gives Mr Qiao some sweet potato chips as a nicotine substitute.

Back at camp, the two men decide to service the truck themselves, to save money for the revolution. For this, Mr Qiao must drive the truck down a narrow pathway, past some rather puny looking wooden poles. Mr Qiao later gets stuck solid in the mud, no one will help him. "Times have changed, you've got to offer them money," his son says. Mr Qiao rejects such an idea. And a group of middle-school students saves the day...

The question now is whether this Mr Qiao really exists – and how he feels about being named as the man who drove the truck that knocked down the pole that fell down and killed Lei Feng.

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Culinary conversion on the road from Bolton

In my early days as a reporter, I won only one distinction: I held the record at the *Bolton Evening News* for the most rapid consumption of bacon, eggs and chips in the office canteen.

I have retained an attachment to food, good and plain, preferably in generous quantities. But, until this week, I never had much interest in, patience for, or willingness to invest in, *haute cuisine*.

Three things happened in the past few days to modify that. One was the appearance of the 1997 *Michelin Guide*, which aroused my curiosity about the status of the leading French chefs, who are almost as feted as movie stars. Another was the discovery, from another newspaper, of a French cut-price system for posh meals, modelled on the airline system of economy flights – a kind of culinary bucket shop. But my first gastronomic experience of the week was accidental.

After two months cooped in a Paris apartment, with occasional day trips for good behaviour, the children had been demanding to go to the countryside. We were recommended a château in Burgundy, which offers cheap weekend breaks.

After two hours on the road, in a slow-moving Amazon of cars, we had reached Fourcault, 40 miles south of Paris. Two hours later we reached the Château de Chilly, a fairy-tale castle with pointed turrets and smartly converted stables for guests.

Three things became clear. First, we were the only people staying in the château, or the château stables, that night. Secondly, the château restaurant, an ambitious, gastronomic establishment, had been kept open exclusively for us and was about to close. Thirdly, the children, force-fed on the road, had no intention of going to sleep.

The dinner-suited waiters looked crestfallen. Plainly they had hoped for grander visitors. But Gallic pragmatism and rural French friendliness triumphed. Room service was not normally provided but, since we were the only guests, they would bring the restaurant to us. We could hear the trolley bumping over the ancient cobbles of the château courtyard for several minutes before the food arrived.

With Clare screaming that her bedclothes were an inch too far to the right and Charlie watching a German version of *Noel's House Party* on TV, we ate an extraordinarily beautiful meal: a meal that was delicate and simple, in the way that strings of pearls are simple: a meal that was more magnificent than those we ate

PARIS DAYS

John Lichfield loses his soul and stomach to haute cuisine in a child-infested château chambre



At your service: A waiter makes his way with a tray of oysters across the Brasserie Flo, in Paris

meant to be eaten slowly by candlelight with great concentration, as if listening to music.

When the 1997 *Michelin Guide* emerged on Monday, our château was mentioned only as a hotel, not as a restaurant. This implies that there are 4,000 better restaurants in France, which must be an injustice. But what would I know, with my taste buds ruined years ago by steaming mounds of bacon, eggs and chips?

Having caught the bug, I decided to try out the service provided by Degrifour, a French economy-travel company, which offers a kind of Super Apex service of cut-price *haute cuisine*. With the economic crisis in France thinning their clientele, a score of top French restaurants joined the scheme two months ago. You can book only through Minitel, the on-line booking and information service operated by France Telecom. All the restaurants available have at least one star in the *Michelin Guide*. To eat at such a restaurant usually costs between 1,000 and 1,500 francs (£110 to £170) a head for a full à la carte dinner with wine. Degrifour offers the same thing, but with a set menu, for a maximum of £55 a head.

We booked at Montparnasse 25, a Michelin one-star restaurant, where we had six courses for slightly less than £50 a head. Six courses sounds greedy but they were small, delicate courses – and all magnificent, though to my corrupted taste no more magnificent than those we ate

in our child-infested bedroom at the unstarred château.

Food is such an elemental human need that the whole concept of an élite cuisine at refined prices is bound to raise moral

problems: how can you justify paying £170 a head for a meal when the same amount might feed a family for a month? In response, functional arguments are deployed: that by striving for

the best, the élite chefs keep up standards; that the best chefs are consulted by mass-food producers on how to improve their lines.

But the justification for *haute cuisine* has to be something

more amorphously cultural. The pleasure of going to a place like Monparnasse 25 is an artistic pleasure. Like the highest art of any kind – great acting, great painting, great writing – the

pleasure of great cuisine is the pleasure of performance: witnessing something simple pushed to an evidently higher level, while maintaining, at its best, a kind of simplicity.

The concept of cooking as an art is a French invention and, like many things French at present, feels itself under threat from modernity. *Le Monde* this week bemoaned the fact that "social penury" was threatening French cuisine. "Substitute technologies, the banalisation of tastes, the changing behavioural patterns of the clientele," said the newspaper's food writer, Jean-Claude Ribaut, "favour the invasion of foreign approaches".

For which read McDonald's, which opened 100 restaurants in France last year, while a three-star restaurant went bankrupt for the first time and several one-star establishments closed. "Good food is the identity of a civilisation," Mr Ribaut asserted. The *Michelin Guide* was trying to force back the hordes of barbarians, he said, but could, in the end, do no more than "uphold the memory of a golden age".

I think that maybe Jean-Claude protests too much: with 81 starred restaurants operating in Paris alone, the burger-barbarians have not yet laid France waste. I defy him to name anywhere in all 20 arrondissements, or all 96 departments, where you can get bacon, egg and chips.

Black widow gets life term

Elizabeth Fullerton
Reuter



Vienna — An Austrian court yesterday sentenced the "Black Widow" Elfriede Blauensteiner to life imprisonment for the murder of a pensioner in one of the most notorious trials in the country's history.

The court in Krems, 30 miles west of Vienna, found Blauensteiner, 66, guilty of poisoning Alois Pichler, 77, with fatal doses of medication. The jury reached its verdict at 3am after 12 hours of deliberation.

Blauensteiner, in a black suit and cream blouse, remained composed, muttering and looking at her watch impatiently as the verdict was read out. Asked if she understood the sentence, she said with defiance: "I understand perfectly".

The jury said Blauensteiner's "pure greed" justified the heavy sentence, noting her "malicious actions did not give the victim any chance to defend himself".

Blauensteiner's former lawyer, Harald Schmidt, was sentenced to seven years in jail

for being an accomplice to grievous bodily harm and falsifying Pichler's will. The two have said they may appeal the verdict.

Although Blauensteiner was charged with only one murder, police are investigating other deaths. Blauensteiner is accused of placing advertisements in newspapers to meet rich, elderly men, poisoning her victims and then gambling away the money she was left in their wills.

Blauensteiner said she enjoyed nursing pensioners and it was a coincidence that some of her patients had died.

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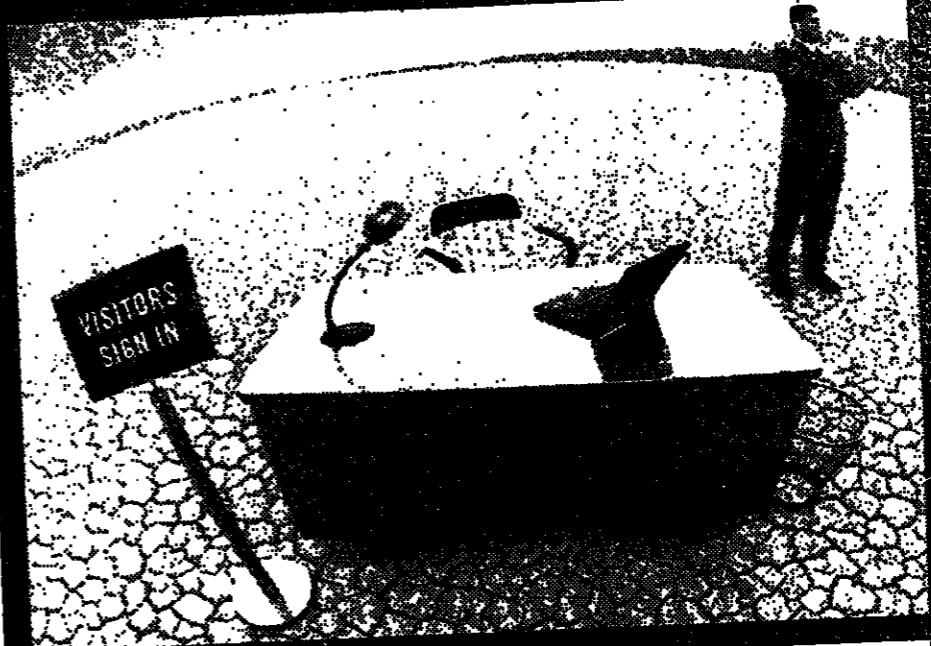
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America's welfare revolution leaves an army of single mothers confused

At Joy House, a Christian shelter for homeless women in downtown Milwaukee, Milasie Gates, 28, is struggling to cope. Her one-year-old, Brandy, has hurled her bottle on the floor again and four-year-old Doris is starting to act up. Milasie dispenses some instant discipline. She squirts a jet of milk formula into Doris's startled face before roughly thrusting the bottle back into the baby's grip.

"They shouldn't be going through this," Ms Gates sighs. Somewhere in the shelter's day area, amongst the sagging furniture and plastic bags bulging with personal belongings of dozens of families, hides her third and eldest child. "I wish I'd known it was going to be like this before I had all these kids".

Less than a mile away, in the city's new YWCA, Fanesia Davis is enjoying a rare moment of calm in the basement computer laboratory. While her children play in the gleaming nursery a few steps down the corridor, Fanesia, 31, is scrolling through software on qualifying to become a plumber.

Neither woman – one desperate, the other full of hope – could have imagined even a few months ago that on this March morning these would be their circumstances. Black and homeless, both belong to the huge class of American single

Radical reforms bring benefits but homelessness is soaring, writes David Usborne in Milwaukee

tions, Britain included, are eager to see the consequences, as they are also searching for ways to ease the welfare burden.

A view of the post-welfare picture is already emerging. Recent months have witnessed an astonishing decline in American welfare rolls. Caseloads across the country have plunged almost 18 per cent since 1994. The drop is explained partly by a strong economy and an unemployment rate of 5.4 per cent. Also at play, however, are reforms that many of the states had already started to implement before the change was endorsed by the President.

No state is further ahead than Wisconsin and no city more gripped by the changes than Milwaukee. A new welfare regime much tougher than that envisaged in Mr Clinton's Bill, will take effect in September.

Called W-2, it will instantly remove from the rolls all single mothers who fail to do some kind of work, whether full-time commercial employment, or jobs in sheltered state-run workshops.

A slightly less rigorous transition scheme called Pay for Performance is already in place, which also demands something in return for benefits. If they do not work, welfare recipients must attend subsidised job training courses or face deductions from their payments.

Wisconsin and its Republican Governor, Tommy Thompson, have been hailed for taming the welfare monster. Its "success" is based on some extraordinary state statistics. In four years, AFDC rolls have been reduced by 41 per cent and they are still shrinking. The goal is to improve people's lives by ending their dependency on state assistance. But with evidence of a rapid rise in the number of homeless in Milwaukee, is that happening? What is absent from the strategy is any attempt to track families once they leave the rolls.

Joy House has seen a 110-per-cent increase in bed occupancy in 12 months. Milasie Gates believes her case reveals the new system's cruelty. Her February assistance cheque was slashed from \$617 (£385) to \$212 (£132) as punishment, she says, for missing one job-search class. Evicted from her apartment, she had no choice but to come here. "I feel like that instead of helping you off [welfare

rolls], they hinder you, by cutting the money so much that you can't survive," she says.

Fanesia Davis, by contrast, is an example of what it is meant to happen. After six years on AFDC, she is dazzled by the possibilities opened up by her programme at the YWCA. "I have to be a role model to my kids," she says. "I don't want them looking at me and saying their mother's on welfare".

One of a handful of non-profit agencies contracted by the state to run job-training and job-search programmes, the YWCA is headed by Julie Taylor. "We know the opportunities are out there for them," she insists. "A big part of what we try to do is make people believe that they can make the changes; many people feel they don't have any power themselves to make the changes in their lives."

Study the reform laboratory that is Wisconsin and two encouraging factors become clear. Many of the keenest reform advocates, such as Ms Taylor, are not of a radical conservative ilk. Their motivation is a desire to improve lives, not save state money. Secondly, Wisconsin, in its efforts to smooth the transition, expects in the short term to spread more money on sup-

porting women like Fanesia and Milasie, not less. The additional funding will broaden healthcare insurance, for instance, and childcare subsidies. The city's Democrat mayor, John Norquist, points out: "Going back to the old system of AFDC is not going to happen, because the electorate will no longer tolerate paying people for doing nothing."

Instead of helping you off welfare, they cut the money so much that you can't survive

mothers long sustained by a drip-feed of federal dollars from a six-decade-old programme known as Aid to Families with Dependent Children, AFDC. But that is all changing.

AFDC, for years the largest component of America's welfare system, is headed for extinction. Last August, President Bill Clinton signed a welfare reform Bill that ends guaranteed aid for single mothers and requires states to begin attaching job conditions and time-limits to assistance. Every recipient will have to work within two years of signing; no one will get the benefits for more than five years in a lifetime.

It is a social experiment of monumental proportions that has triggered anguish among some liberals, who foresee thousands being tossed onto the streets. Many European na-



Social insecurity: Sharon Jackson beds down with her children at the Milwaukee Joy House shelter for homeless women. Photograph: Chicago Tribune

US diplomats jockey for plum London posting

Rupert Cornwell
Washington

The New York financier and Democratic party *eminentissime*, Felix Rohatyn has joined the list to succeed William Crowe in the plum post of US ambassador to London, where the former Joint Chiefs chairman steps down this autumn.

Hitherto Mr Rohatyn, managing director of Lazard Frères in New York, had been considered a leading candidate to take over the Paris embassy, vacated after the death last month of Pamela Harriman. But he is now being canvassed for a post made especially sensitive by the near certainty of the first Labour government in two decades and the close US involvement in the search for a settlement in Northern Ireland.

The public front-runner remains Swannie Hunt, youngest daughter of the Texas oil tycoon, HL Hunt, and currently ambassador to Austria. Indeed, the 46-year-old Ms Hunt, a massive donor to President Clinton's 1992 campaign, is said to have "measured the drapes" during a recent stop-over at Winfield House, the ambassador's residence in London.

Ms Hunt, whose personal worth has been put at up to \$500m (£300m), has been a dynamic envoy in Vienna and is close to Madeleine Albright, the

new Secretary of State. But some question whether she has sufficient experience for the London post. Another non-diplomat mentioned for the job is Reed Hundt, currently head of the Federal Communications Commission here, and a friend of Mr Clinton from their Yale Law School days.

The London Ambassadorship is but one element in the traditional diplomatic reshuffle at the start of a new administration. John Kornblum, Assistant Secretary of State for European and Canadian affairs in Mr Clinton's first term, is tipped for Bonn, while Frank Wisner, US Ambassador to Delhi, heads the list for Paris, should Mr Rohatyn go to London.

James Collins, a former US deputy chief of mission in Moscow and currently the State Department's top specialist on countries of the former Soviet union, is in line to return to Russia to succeed Thomas Pickering, who is returning as Under-secretary for Political Affairs, the third-ranking post at State.

In Tokyo, outgoing Ambassador Walter Mondale may be followed by the Democratic House Speaker, Tom Foley. In the past, the notably Anglophile Mr Foley has been tipped for London. But he would satisfy Japan's traditional preference that a prestigious ex-politician represent the US in its capital.

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Belgian streets echo with the anger of a nation bitter at guardians of justice



Symbolic gesture: Renault workers from Vilvoorde carrying a chassis before throwing it over police barricades at the French embassy in Brussels. Photograph: Reuters



Industrial day of action shows solidarity with sacked Renault workers

Katherine Butler
Vilvoorde, Belgium

A small group representing 3,000 Renault workers whose jobs have just been axed emerged briefly yesterday from the giant car plant in Vilvoorde where they have been occupying for a week now. They were taking flowers to the shrine at a Brussels petrol station where the body of a nine-year-old child was unearthed last Thursday morning.

The symbolic gesture linking the victims of the Renault crisis which has rocked Belgium and France, with the tragedy of Loubna Benissa, the latest victim of Belgium's paedophile nightmare, was just one in an extraordinary day of solidarity which saw workers come out in sympathy throughout Belgium, but also in France and Spain.

Several hundred marched on the French embassy in Brussels,

throwing the chassis of a Renault

Megane over the gates, a protest

at the failure of the French state

which is part owner of Renault

to prevent the closure, de-

nounced by the Catholic Church

in France yesterday as immoral.

One-hour strikes were staged at

Volvo, Volkswagen and Ford

plants. Even showroom dealers

closed their doors in honour of

a pledge not to sell a single Re-

nault car in Belgium yesterday.

Meanwhile, the family of

Loubna Benissa appealed for

calm after angry protests and ri-

ots in the belles district of Brus-

sels amid mounting suspicions

that Patrick Deroche, the con-

victed child abuser who has been

charged with her murder, may

have enjoyed police protection.

Events which are in sub-

stance unrelated appeared to

come together yesterday, ignit-

ing a fresh wave of emotion in

a country where public confi-

dence in the political and judi-

cial establishment could hardly

be more fragile. The case of

Loubna Benissa is uncon-

nected to the Dutroux pa-

dophile gang but the discovery

of her body four years after po-

lice closed her file has sparked

outrage directed at an out-of-

touch system which allowed a

convicted child abuser to oper-

ate for years with impunity.

Industrial anger, meanwhile,

is directed at a political class

which seems just as out of

touch with how millions of work-

ers have to pay the price of cut-

throat competition. There is dis-
belief at the ease with which a
highly profitable plant could be
axed overnight and bitter re-
sentment in Belgium that jobs
there had to be sacrificed before
those on Renault's home
ground in France.

The European Commission
said that Renault failed to re-
spect European Union direc-
tives on worker consultation
before announcing the closure.
Brussels has also blocked
Spain's attempts to subsidise
Renault's modernisation of a
plant in Valladolid and has
promised a review of legislation
on industrial relocation. But the
commission's words did little to
soothe disenchantment with
Europe at Vilvoorde.

"This is a catastrophe for us,
and it proves that the social Eu-
rope does not exist, we have a so-
cial cemetery," said Gerard
Verbeke who has been at Renault
for 22 years and at 45 sees little
prospect of finding another job.
"Europe is for capital, it is a

Europe is for
capital, it is a
Europe which
does nothing for
workers

Europe which does nothing for
workers," said Frank Stoffels a
metal worker from Antwerp
who had come to show support.
"What use is it to have Euro-
pean directives if Renault does
not have to pay any penalties for
breaking them?" Maximum
penalties faced by Renault if it is
found guilty of breaching
EU law are around £400,000.

During the day hundreds of
workers from other industries ar-
rived to support the sit-in. "It
might be our turn in a few
months time," said John, a flight
attendant with Sabena airline.

Union leaders say the sit-in
will continue until they get re-
assurances that at least some of
Renault's production will be re-
tained in Vilvoorde. They expect
management to try early next
week to get out the 5,000 cars
being held inside the factory. "If
they get them out it will be over
our dead bodies" one said.

significant shorts

Madrid infuriated by Basque killing acquittal

A San Sebastian jury acquitted a separatist, Mikel Otegi, on grounds he was not responsible for his actions when he killed two policemen. He said he had a blackout at the time of the shooting. The Interior Minister, Jaime Mayor Oreja, said it was a "risk" to hold jury trials in the Basque country and promised reforms to prevent the repetition of such a "nonsensical situation". Elizabeth Nash - Madrid

Michael Manley dies

Michael Manley, prime minister of Jamaica 1972-1980 and 1989-1992, died of cancer, aged 72. He also led Third World causes, including liberation efforts in Africa. Reuters - Kingston Obituary, page 18

Move to free Russian PoWs

Russian MPs voted to amnesty Chechens who took part in the secessionist war in an attempt to exchange Russian PoWs for Chechens in detention. Reuters - Moscow

Paws for thought

Paw prints of tigers or leopards, believed to be extinct in the region, were found at Guilin, 1,000 miles from Peking, the first traces of big cats there in 30 years. AP - Peking

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obituaries / gazette

Michael Manley

Michael Manley was one of the great figures of modern Third World politics. His standing as an inspirational leader spread beyond his native Jamaica to all parts of the Caribbean and to many other Third World societies as well.

Manley always saw clearly that the politics of reform which he espoused in Jamaica depended upon associated changes in the wider international economy. This led him to take up articulate and brave, if sometimes foolhardy, positions in the debate about the shaping of a "new international economic order" which brought the plight of the developing world to the centre of the international stage during the course of the 1970s. Less changed than he imagined or hoped, but Manley succeeded nevertheless in stamping something of his huge and vibrant personality on that phase of world history.

Manley was born into one of Jamaica's leading middle-class families in 1924. His father, Norman, was a brilliant lawyer, destined to found the Jamaican People's National Party (PNP) and to be the island's political leader during the last days of British colonial rule between 1955 and 1962. Manley's mother, Edna, was an equally brilliant artist and sculptress.

Their second son inherited his considerable intellectual powers and gifts of advocacy from his father, but just as importantly drew from his mother a human sensitivity, a deep integrity and a basic liking of people (of all classes) which marked his own subsequent political career in deeply formative ways.

He attended Jamaica College, the colony's exclusive secondary school, excelling mostly as an athlete, but showing early signs of his rebellious nature by publicly challenging the authoritarian approach of his headmaster and ultimately resigning from the college. He spent the last years of the Second World War in the Royal Canadian Air Force, before enrolling in late 1945 as a student at the London School of Economics.

This was a critical phase in Manley's political development. Like so many others, he came under the influence of Harold Laski and began to take on board many of the dominant socialist democratic ideas of Labour England at that time. Despite the claims of critics from both left and right at different moments in his career, he never really budged from this early ideological grounding.

After graduating, Manley

spent another year in Britain training as a journalist and following the fortunes of the West Indian cricket team. Cricket was always a great love, and for him a defining feature of what it was to be a West Indian, and he later wrote the huge *A History of West Indies Cricket* (1988).

By 1952, however, Manley was back in Jamaica and was immediately projected by his father into the key role of union organiser within the PNP-affiliated National Workers' Union (NWU). It was another defining moment for "Young Boy", as Manley came to be dubbed by the sugar workers. Initially a highly energetic public speaker, he grew over the next 20 years of active and successful trade unionism into an impassioned orator. He also came to acquire a deep awareness of the many social and economic ills, above all the deep-rooted inequality, at the heart of Jamaican society.

When his father retired as PNP leader in 1969, it was thus natural that Manley, already an elected member of the House of Representatives, should succeed him. He sought to articulate the growing disaffection of ordinary black Jamaicans and swept to a dramatic and exciting election victory in 1972. Manley was "Joshua": he epitomised the anger of his people; he defined socialism as "love"; and he set energetically about the task of building a better society for all Jamaicans.

His policies were those of a radical social democrat, but wisely or unwisely he worked with Marxist elements in Jamaican society and quickly came to be seen from the outside, especially in the United States, as a dangerous "anti-imperialist". At home, his policies were characterised by nationalisation, higher taxation and a commitment to extending literacy; abroad, he befriended Castro, took a leading role in the non-aligned movement and deeply alarmed the Americans.

However, although there were successes in terms of building popular self-confidence, his populist experiment ended in ultimate failure, the economy broken on the back of disinvestment and IMF-imposed austerity and the society riven by intra-party conflict. The 1980 election, which saw the PNP severely defeated, was marked by great violence.

In opposition, Manley rebuilt his strength and his nerve and took stock of changing ideas about economic development. In 1988 he was again supporting executives down the other. They were all obstinate and inflexible, while he and I were fierce in our arguments.

But if Manley sensed that deadlock was too close he would suddenly bring, say, the *Guernica* into his tirade and we would both discuss Picasso, the others looking from one to the other of us like the heads in the advertisement "That's Shell That Was". After one of these artistic breaks we were able to turn back to the consideration of pay and conditions in the mildest of manners.

The union was the theatre Michael Manley understood best. He was indeed a charismatic political leader, but there were times when his enthusiasm overwhelmed his judgement. Someone with his great style, but well advised, would be a godsend to any country.

Heroic: Manley was 'Joshua'. He epitomised the anger of his people

They called Frank Brennan "The Rock of Tyneside", and with good reason. When Newcastle United became a footballing power in the land soon after the Second World War, Brennan was the colossus at the heart of their rearguard, standing between the great centreforwards of the day and the Magpies' goal like a walking seam of granite.

A strapping, raw-boned Scot with an engaging personality, he became an adoptive Geordie and a local cult hero, sharing the limelight with his even more famous team-mates, the centre-forward Jackie Milburn and left-winger Bobby Mitchell. Ma-

jestic in the air, a fearsome tackler and deceptively fleet of foot for such a large man, Brennan specialised in winning the ball and passing it on, with a minimum of fuss, to more creative colleagues.

After excelling as a teenager in Scottish junior leagues, he took his first step towards soccer eminence by joining the Airdrieonians club, based to the east of Glasgow, as an amateur, in 1941, later turning professional and representing Scotland in wartime competition.

The turning point of Brennan's career arrived in 1946 when he played brilliantly for Scotland in a Victory interna-

tional against England, snuffing out the threat of the star spearhead Tommy Lawton and attracting the attention of leading clubs from south of the border.

Both Sunderland and Preston North End pressed their suit, but the race for his signature was won by Newcastle, who paid £7,500 for the privilege of taking the hugely promising 22-year-old to St James' Park.

Brennan made an instant impact in the English game, soon making his official international debut for Scotland (surely he would have won more than his seven caps but for the gifted Willie Woodburn of Glasgow Rangers), and was ever-

present in the United side which gained promotion to the First Division in 1948.

For the next few seasons Newcastle were a top side, always missing out on the title but making ample amends with successive FA Cup triumphs, a glorious one against Blackpool in 1951 followed by a distinctly fortuitous victory over Arsenal a year later. Brennan played a key role in both, bottling up the effervescent Stan Mortensen in the first and holding firm against the gallant Gunners, who had been reduced to 10 men through injury, in the second. Thereafter he continued to be a bulwark of the

team until a financial dispute with the club cost him his place in 1954/55 – he missed United's third Wembley victory in five years in 1955 – and led to his controversial departure in March 1956. It was the era of the injurious maximum wage system and the fans pilloried the directors over what was perceived as unfair treatment of their favourite. There were public protest meetings and the case was raised at the Trades Union Congress but all to no avail.

Now Brennan joined the non-League North Shields as player-coach, serving them enterprisingly for six seasons before spending five years as a

globe-trotting coach, spreading the soccer gospel to such far-flung outposts as Singapore and Trinidad. In 1967 he returned to North Shields, inspiring them to FA Amateur Cup glory in 1969, then managing Fourth Division Darlington for a brief spell in the early 1970s. There followed a stint as trainer-coach of the part-timers South Shields before Brennan opted to concentrate on his sports outfit's business in Newcastle. Eventually he retired to the nearby Whitley Bay.

Frank Brennan will be remembered best for his prime in the black-and-white stripes of Newcastle United. Beyond reasonable dispute, he remains the finest, most dominant defender in the club's history. Given the current Magpies' notorious defensive frailty, what wouldn't their manager Kenny Dalglish pay for the modern equivalent of "The Rock of Tyneside"?

Ivan Ponting

Frank Brennan, footballer, coach and manager; born Annathill, near Glasgow 23 April 1924; played for Airdrieonians 1941–46; Newcastle United 1946–56; capped seven times by Scotland 1946–54; manager, Darlington 1971–72; married (three sons, three daughters); died Newcastle upon Tyne 5 March 1997.



Brennan: a bulwark

Photograph: Hulton Getty

Births, Marriages & Deaths

BIRTHS

DAVIS: On 5 March 1997, at Sheffield, to Karen (Olliffe) and John, a son, Anthony.

HUGHES: To Ruth (nee Manley) and Nicholas, a son, Russell David Glyn, born 13 January 1997. Ruth was a brother for Oliva and Eleanor.

DEATHS

WOODFORD: Angela, died 4 March 1997, after a short, determined fight with cancer. Beloved wife of Clive and Dominic, and wife of Bernard. Requiem Mass and burial at Our Lady of Sorrows, Epsom, Surrey, on Friday 14 March, 12 noon. Flowers or donations to St Luke's Cancer Appeal, c/o Sherleif and Sons, Trulls House, Dorking, Surrey.

IN MEMORIAM

GAVIHERE: Kundu. In loving memory of our dearest son, always in our hearts. Mumma and Baba.

MANSFIELD: Peter, died 4 March 1996. I love you. I miss you. I thank you for 35 years of perfect happiness. Now and always. Lulu.

TOMORROW: Air Marshal Sir Roger Austin, Controller, Aircraft Ministry of Defence, 57; Mr Bill Beaumont, sports commentator, 74; Mr Andrew Bennett MP, 58; Dr Michael Brock, former Warden, George's House, Windsor Castle, 77; M Andrie Courtois, counsellor, 74; Sir Rousley Cumming-Bruce, former Lord of Appeal, 85; Mr Bobby

Forthcoming marriages

Mr D. M. Jackson and Mrs R. C. Hughes

The engagement is announced between David, eldest son of Mr and Mrs Colin Jackson, of Ringmer, East Sussex, and Roslyn Christina, only daughter of the late Mr and Mrs Glyn Hughes, of Saltdean, Brighton, East Sussex.

Birthdays

TODAY: Maj Gen Sir Christopher Aire, former private secretary to the Prince and Princess of Wales, 63.

Professor Charles Bauer, historian and author, 43; Mr Gyles Brandreth, MP, 49; Sir Julian Boulard, former ambassador to West Germany, 68;

Professor Sir Donald Campbell, former President, Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, 67; Sir Anthony Care, sculptor, 73; Miss Cyd Charisse, actress and dancer, 70; Mr Phil Edwards, cricketer, 46; Mr Michael Grade, former chief executive of Channel 4, 44; Ms Eileen Herlie, actress, 77; The Hon Douglas Hunt MP, 67; Mr Michael Hobday, interior designer, 77; Miss Anna Jenner, ballerina, 33; Miss Lynn Redgrave, actress, 54; Dr Jonathan Sacks, Chief Rabbi, 49; Miss Lynn Seymour, ballerina, 58; Professor Stephen Smith, gynaecologist, 46; Professor Norman Stone, historian, 56; Mr Robert Tear, operatic tenor, 58; Mr John Ward MP, 72; Mr David Wilkie, swimmer, 43.

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Fischer, chess champion, 54; Mr John Golding, trade union leader, 68; Mr Neil Hamilton MP, 48; Professor Sir Donald Harrison, laryngologist, 72; Dr Thomas Johnston, former Principal, Heriot-Watt University, 70; General Sir Frank King, 78; Sir Norman Lindop, chemist and educational administrator, 76; Mr Robin Martin, former chairman, Hewlett-Packard, 62; Mr David Matthews, composer, 54; Sir Nicholas Monck, former Permanent Secretary, Department of Employment, 62; Sir Donald Rattee, High Court judge, 60; Professor Kenneth Robinson, former Vice-Chancellor, University of Hong Kong, 83; Mr Mickey Spillane, novelist, 79; Lord Thirlwall, former Governor of the Bahamas, 85; Professor David Weatherill, entomologist, 64; Mr David Willett MP, 41.

Anniversaries

TODAY: Birthe Kenneth Graham, author, 1859; Freddie, William Goude, painter and typographer, 1865; Dame Louise-Honor Bertrand, companion, 1869; Sir Thomas Beecham, conductor, 1961; Richard Austin Butler, Banff Butler of Saltfoss, statesman, 1882. On this day a son was born in Britain, 1948: the United States landed 2,500 marines in South Vietnam, 1968; the Nelson Column in Dublin was destroyed by an IRA bomb, 1968. Today is the Feast Day of St Dubtac, St Felix of Dunwich, St Humfray or Hunfrid, St John of God, St Julian of Toledo, Saints Philemon and Apollonius, St Pontius of Carthage, St Seneca of Scenty, St Peter of Obazine, and St Venund.

TOMORROW: Births: Ernesto Vespucci, explorer, 1451; Victoria Mary Sackville-West, novelist, 1892; Yuri Alekseyevich Gagarin, astronaut, 1934; Death: David Rizzio, secretary to Mary, Queen of Scots, murdered 1566; Arnold Toynbee, for-

mer philosopher, 1883; George Burns (Nathan Birnbaum), comedian, writer and producer, 1996. On this day: Napoleon Buonaparte married Josephine de Beauharnais, 1796; the Soviet Union sent the first dog, Laika, into space, in *Sputnik 2*, 1957; Tomorrow is Mothering Sunday and the Feast Day of St Bosco, St Catherine of Bologna, St Dominic Savio, St Francis of Rome, St Ignatius of Loyola and St Paul.

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There's no future in a Peter Pan society

We are the Peter Pan society. We are fixated with youth and give, as a culture, less and less to age and experience. But unlike the sentimental Victorians, whose "boy who would not grow up" was forever 10, our cultural clock stops at 16, or soon afterwards. The cult of youth infects all aspects of our lives, from fashion to politics. Throughout the media, there is more interest in the views of *Swampy* and the Spice Girls than in those of the old - who may be wise.

The so-called youth vote is considered a potent force, despite the fact that young people are more likely to be apathetic and irresponsible, and less likely to vote. Conversely, although older people are more interested, well read, better informed and much more likely to vote, "grey power" is surprisingly absent from British public life.

Yesterday, the three main party leaders gave their views to young journalists on the BBC's *Newsworld*, the latest of several pre-election youth initiatives. Yet grillings by pensioners have hardly been a prominent part of the election warm-up. Even this week's debate about pensions was not about our responsibility to the present-day elderly, but about whether today's young people would end up paying more for their own old age.

Of course, this is an important issue. The main defect of the system of pension provi-

sion in this country, apart from its daunting complexity, is that today's people of working age are not persuaded or forced to save enough for their old age. Many do make adequate provision, but many of the less-well-off are going to be left behind.

However, it is curious how little attention is paid to the fate of the 10 million people who are already over 60. Roughly speaking, about one-third of them are reasonably well-off - indeed they include most of the very richest individuals in the country. But another one-third form the largest and most ignored section of the population living in poverty. They used to be a central concern of the Labour Party. But Tony Blair has said rather brutally of Labour's pledge at the last election to increase the basic state pension by £5 a week or £8 a week for couples, that it did not win his party a single extra vote. Unfortunately, this is broadly true - one of the explanations for politicians' lack of interest in wooing the grey voters is that it is much less volatile than others. Pensioners are not only better-informed about politics, but also more fixed (and often more Conservative) in their views. Their very loyalty allows party leaders to ignore them.

It is, nevertheless, not just a shame but a betrayal of trust between the generations that so many of the elderly have been treated so shabbily since the link between the state pen-



sion and average earnings was broken in 1980. This breached the implied contract under which a whole generation paid its National Insurance contributions - that they would share in the country's rising prosperity when they retired.

In fact, one of New Labour's least-noticed spending commitments is Harriet Harman's promise to make sure that the poorest pensioners get their full entitlement to social security benefits, which many are too proud to claim. Not only is this promise unpublicised, it is also uncirculated, and could mean spending an extra £1bn a year.

This is the least any government should feel obliged to do, and it is a pity that it came as a forced concession made under pressure from Barbara Castle last year. And indeed Lady Castle's passionate plea at the Blackpool conference was typical of the way in which we treat elderly politicians: she was idolised for five minutes and then politely voted down.

The cult of the Labour leader's youth does not help. Mr Blair is always "talkin' 'bout my generation". If you did not know that he would be the youngest prime minister since Lord Liverpool in 1812, he will soon let you know, talking about how "to people of my generation", Marxist state control is old hat, or antagonistic industrial relations a distant memory. He comes dangerously close to

implying that old people have no place in his vision of Britain as a "Young Country".

But the impression he gives rings hollow. The more he talks of his youth, the more he sounds like someone trying to recapture something he has lost. And this turns out to be nostalgia for an era when we were unembarrassed by a sense of family obligation. Mr Blair invokes a thinly-modernised model of a society based on the extended family, where elders are treated with respect and younger people take responsibility for them in their old age. His rhetoric of community is based on the rights and duties we first learn in families.

And this past is not wholly lost, as an ESRC report to be published on Monday shows. Family bonds are still strong: people stay in touch with their extended families much more than is often supposed.

No one is in favour of restoring the Victorian patriarchy, but perhaps there is scope for a rebalancing of our culture, for a little more honouring of fathers and (don't forget tomorrow) mothers. Not to mention grandparents, uncles, aunts and the rest. And let us not forget our pensioners in the coming election campaign.

And by that, we mean listening to them, not merely paying them. Age doesn't necessarily bring wisdom, but experience often does. A Peter Pan society is also a childish one.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Beware the Tory MP and his racist gaffe - or was it?

Sir: Far from being a buffoon, David Evans MP is likely a sharp, if repugnant operator. Offensive and ugly racist language became the stock-in-trade of right-wingers in the Australian election campaign a year ago - and far from

Polly Toynbee's point ("A glimpse at the dark heart of Toryism", 6 March) about "political correctness" - by any standards a slippery concept - is nicely made. It has indeed become the ideal sop for right-wing commentators used to lend off on any demand for intellectual exertion. With Evans in mind, is "political correctness" not just the politically correct term for civility and good-manners?

I have no doubt that we shall hear more boorish and inflammatory outbursts in the coming campaign, but think twice before labelling them ill-judged or naive.

Dr NANU GREWAL
Oriel College, Oxford

Sir: Polly Toynbee is right that those who claim to deplore the language of equality actually deplore the idea of equality, but she makes only a vague allusion to the principles of modern linguistics which underpin her argument.

According to Ferdinand de Saussure's structuralist theory of

linguistics, the way people use words is indivisible from their meaning. There cannot be a difference in form without a difference in meaning.

The English language is less susceptible to inherently sexist usage than those languages which have a gender system, but it does have a colourful and varied range of derogatory terms for women and foreigners, as Ms Toynbee mentioned: "wogs", "bimbos", "tarts", "mig-nogs" and so on. There are far more ways to insult a woman or a foreigner than there are to insult a white male.

ALEXANDER HOFMANN
(A white male)
St Andrews, Fife

Sir: Polly Toynbee doesn't cast her net widely enough. Opinions like those of David Evans MP are, sadly, by no means restricted to Tories and taxi-drivers. Think of all these Labour voters in Northern workingmen's clubs gawking along with Bernard Manning.

Evans, Manning and John Carlisle's taxi driver represent a resentful backlash against the progressive changes of the last 30 years. Their values have been superseded by better ones, and they don't like it.

JAMES SCOTT
Great Linford, Buckinghamshire

Sir: I take exception to the final paragraph of Polly Toynbee's article. There are over 1,000 Conservative Clubs, more than twice the number of any other type of political club. I have never been to a Conservative Club which is "full of old, sour, mean, white faces".

Polly Toynbee has shown that she is just as capable of making "politically incorrect" sweeping generalisation as those she sought to denounce.

KEN HARGREAVES
Secretary, The Association of
Conservative Clubs Ltd
London SW1

Sir: Racism and sexism, which are different forms of xenophobia, share a common thought process: the definition of a group to which the practitioner does not belong, the attribution to that group of unpleasant characteristics and the willingness to punish all supposed members of the group on the assumption that they possess those characteristics.

Polly Toynbee is not exempt from xenophobic reasoning. She contemptuously attributes a marmalade of disgraceable attitudes to all us Conservative voters. We represent somewhere between a third and half of her fellow-citizens, yet I feel that if she could she would

abolish the lot of us. We do disagree with many of her prescriptions for improving economic and social conditions, but if our analysis is different our motives are no baser than hers.

COLIN ANGWIN
London W8

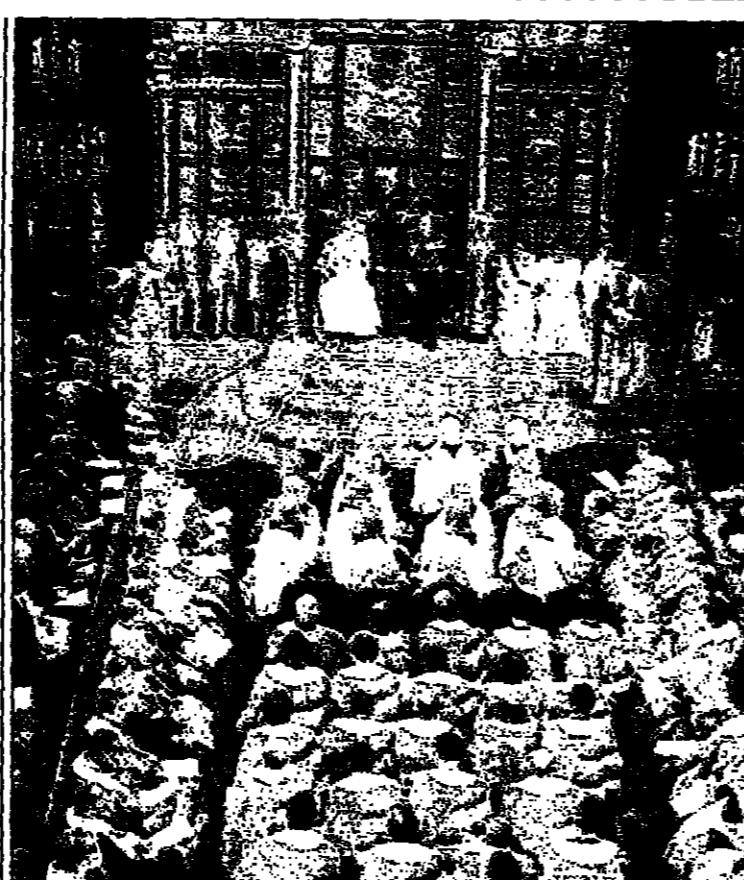
Sir: What has Luton done to offend Polly Toynbee? We may have John Carlisle as MP for the north of the town (though many thought him MP for white Johannesburg) and Graham Bright as MP for the south but, thank God, we don't have to suffer David Evans, who is MP for Welwyn Hatfield.

He did, as chairman, preside in our football team's slide from the old first division to the present second (or the old third) but this is the limit of his malign influence on the town. Equally, pray God, the influence of Messrs Bright and Carlisle will be lifted in a few weeks.

PHILIP JONES
Luton, Bedfordshire

Sir: Every so often my husband will rise from the breakfast table muttering forcefully, "You tell 'em, Polly. Well said. You tell 'em." This morning (6 March) was no exception. What on earth is going on?

FELICITY MARRIAN
London SW3



Peacock on parade: red robes fill the Lords chamber at the State Opening of Parliament

Smokers always knew the risks

Sir: I don't smoke; I've never smoked. And the reason is that when I was about eight, my mother, who did smoke very heavily, showed me the "tissue test". In this, she blew uninhaled cigarette smoke through a tissue as compared to inhaled smoke. She showed me the brown mark from the uninhaled smoke, and explained forcefully that every time she drew smoke into her lungs, she "beastly stuff" stayed there. "My lungs," she said, "are like sponges soaked with disgusting tar."

This was not in the Sixties or Seventies. It was not in the Forties or Fifties. It was in the Thirties. And my mother, and all her generation, knew perfectly well what they were doing to themselves. How else did they explain their "smokers' coughs"? Why else did they offer each other "coffin-nails"?

I hate to come to the aid of the tobacco industry, but fair's fair. It is utter nonsense for what you laughably call "early smokers" to claim they did not know that smoking damaged their health (report, 6 March). King James I knew how bad tobacco was for you when it first hit these shores.

If the tobacco companies were not so busy trying to pretend that smoking is not dangerous, and called upon old smokers or elderly people whose parents smoked to give evidence that it was well-known that smoking damaged your health and was related to fatal illness, they would have a better case for seeing off those who claim they followed fashion in the Forties and Fifties without knowing the dangers.

LYNN REID BANKS
Bromminster, Dorset

Bishop tried to bring peace to parish

Sir: John Walsh distorts events in the parish of Kings Norton (diary, 6 March)? The Bishop of Birmingham and his senior staff have for some time been deeply involved in trying to restore a proper working relationship between the Rev Eve Pitts and the rest of the clergy team with whom she is meant to be working. It was only when all else had failed that the Bishop couched a request for Mrs Pitts to resign with the offer to continue to find her other work as a priest. To describe the Bishop's actions as insensitive and to couple the piece with the announcement of his engagement was unworthy.

SUE PRIMMER
Bishop's Press Officer
Diocese of Birmingham

Jerusalem ballot box free of scorpions

Sir: Patrick Cockburn claims in his article "Another sting in the tale of the city of scorpions" (4 March) that the Jewish majority in Jerusalem is artificial. He points out that towns such as Bethlehem and Ramallah are deliberately not included by Israel in the city's boundaries, because of the high numbers of Palestinians that live in these areas.

These towns have never been seen, and still are not seen, as part of the city of Jerusalem either by the Jews nor by the Palestinians living in the area. It is true that Palestinian neighbourhoods such as Abu-Dhish, which are not included in the boundaries of the city, are effectively a part of it, but the Palestinian population in these areas is not significant enough anyway to change the fact that a Jewish majority does exist today in the city.

ERAN PELEG
Pembroke College, Oxford

LETTER from THE EDITOR

Rader suggestion of the week comes from John Ormerod of Bury St Edmunds who complains about the phrase "Anthony (now Lord) Barber" and switches between Lord and Roy Jenkins. He writes: "Could you consider becoming the first newspaper to drop titles altogether? (I believe the *New Scientist* has done so). Do away with Lords, Ladies, Masters, Mrs and Misses, doctors, professors and all, using them only when needed for identification. Strike a blow for equality!"

It is an intriguing idea. What I wonder, do readers think? Would you resent a missing piece of information - for instance that X was a peer, or Y an archbishop - or would you prefer the newspaper to be a democratically flattened meeting place, at least as far as titles, honours and other handles go? Most views welcome - though perhaps on this occasion, it would be fair if members of the Royal Family and Highland clan leaders refrained from taking part.

The most interesting party of the week turns out to be *Tribune*'s 60th birthday bash at Brown's restaurant in London. New Labour, sleek and brimming with confidence, rubbed shoulders with dishevelled veterans from the Campaign for Real Socialism, florid trade unionists and the florid of radical hackery. Surging Labour optimism about their chances in the election and, not far behind that in importance, a fair bar, help ensure general bonhomie.

But tension is just below the surface. For instance, a discussion among hard-edged and earnest Blairites about the need for radical changes to pensions, not so different from Peter Lilley's proposals, is broken short by a characteristic display of operate from Barbara Castle. Sir Michael Foot are the "Gog and Magog of Old Labour". Some elements of the party, she warns, have been trying to exercise the two of them for years. "They will not succeed," roars the Red and profoundly octogenarian Baroness.

And Lilley's proposals on pensions? If the Labour movement doesn't scupper this kind of thing "It is - DEAD!" Just

Deeply unfair, bug-eyed, rotten damn Press Award judges affected by too many years on the sherry (oh all right, *Independent* - no points)

On Thursday evening, we endure the cheerful abuse of allegedly fraternal colleagues at the British Press Awards annual journalistic beano in London. Deeply unfair, bug-eyed, rotten damn judges, affected, no doubt, by too many years on the fortified British sherry produce a situation which has developed - as Emperor Hirohito would put it - not entirely to our advantage. (Oh, all right then, *Independent* - no points)

Andrew Marr

QUOTE UNQUOTE

Well she's a single girl, lives with her boyfriend, three bastard children, lives in Cambridge, never done a proper job. People have to make their mind up - David Evans, *Tory MP*, on his Labour opponent in the general election, Melanie Johnson

After due consideration, I regret some of the things I said and I apologise to the Prime Minister and to others for any embarrassment or offence which may have been caused - David Evans, *Tory MP*

Ramsey MacDonald sat me on his knee and I've looked at Labour leaders in a funny way ever since - Tony Benn, *Labour MP*

I don't think I experienced many Labour MPs being as greedy as the Tories were. And, being a Tory, it hurts me to say that - Ian Greer, *Lobbyist*

I can pull him back as though he were on one of those dog leads - Jane Clark, wife of former *Tory minister Alan Clark*

I find dimness interesting. I often wonder what it's like not to be an intellectual - Anne Hawley, novelist

To forbid all human cloning now might also halt a whole new branch of medicine before it begins - Steve Jones, professor of genetics at University College, London

The war destroyed the demand for garden gnomes and bird baths - Terry Major-Ball, the Prime Minister's brother

Profitable future for terrestrial TV

Sir: Rob Brown ("Two-brains" Elstein caught in two minds", 3 March) was not quite to have followed what I said on *South Bank Live*. The audience share of the US networks has indeed declined, but their revenue, value and investment in programming have all risen more steeply. I made that argument consistently through my years at Sky: the new media will erode terrestrial audiences, but barely affect their revenues. I say exactly the same now as I did at Channel 5.

Rupert Murdoch runs a successful twin terrestrial/satellite strategy in the US on precisely this basis. There is no contradiction involved.

Far from Channel 5 having "an abysmally low budget", it will have three times the spending power of Sky One, which wins a 5 per cent share in satellite homes against 40 competitors. In three-quarters of the homes receiving it, Channel 5 will face just four competitors.

DAVID ELSTEIN
Chief Executive
Channel 5 Broadcasting Ltd
London WC2

Fur farms: better to be partly right

Sir: Richard North's article on the farming of mink for their fur (6 March) quotes Dr Georgia Mason of Oxford University, who says that mink is probably the best example of factory farming and the least cause for concern. Mr. North's conclusion is that buying fur is probably less immoral than buying battery eggs. This may be true but it is still a rather weak defence of fur-farming.

The sad reality is that animals are exploited in many different ways for food, clothing, entertainment and experimentation. Oppose it all and you will be labelled an extremist; oppose only some of it and you will be accused of hypocrisy.

It is inconsistent to oppose fur but not battery eggs, but at least in doing so, one will be demonstrating some compassion, one of the requirements of their replacements is that they will vote for whatever Tony Blair tells them to.

It might remove the inbuilt Tory

Blair's packed House no gain for democracy

Sir: Have I got this right? According to Fran Abrams ("Blair's lords-a-leaping ready to bring down the house", 5 March), to make the House of Lords more democratic the plan is to replace those Lords who are there simply because their ancestors did a favour for Charles II, Gladstone or whoever with people who have done a favour for Tony Blair.

Whilst the peers to be replaced are now beholden to anybody and may vote in the way they feel is in the national interest, one of the requirements of their replacements is that they will vote for whatever Tony Blair tells them to.

Letters should be addressed to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL (fax 0171-332 2456; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk) and include a daytime telephone number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. We regret we are unable to acknowledge unpublished letters.

the saturday story

Just what is fashion for...?

... apart from employing supermodels and making people rich? For a start, it's sewn into the very fabric of our everyday lives; after all, we all wear clothes. But fashion's brief goes far beyond mere function. By Peter Popham

My 17-year-old son has no income, and he spends every last penny of it on his clothes. He spent £40 recently on a cotton jumper emblazoned with the logo from *Planet of the Apes* and the word FUCT. His white, suede Vans boots, with thick rubber soles and the crucial brand name inscribed on the tip of the toe, set him back £50. Today, he will go to Camden Market and buy the thin brown woolly item he has set his heart on which hangs down below his waist and has the word Blunt printed in orange on the nipple inside a blue oval frame. It will cost him £35.

I don't understand it. I don't know what it's all about. Occasionally, something he buys hits you in the face - those orange combat trousers he wore last summer coming back from

Glastonbury, but most of the time, it's just dimly mystifying - all these non-descript mass-produced garments with their cryptic, half-joke brand names. But I understand that it matters. He thinks about his choices for overkill, and started pacing themselves. Milan, accordingly, has passed practically unnoticed. He's doing something important, he's creating himself or some sort of carcass, he's building an identity with his Blunts and Vans and FUCTs.

We are in the midst of the spring shows - London and Milan behind us, Paris and New York yet to come - and fashion is all around us. It's the same every year, but it's gone to a new extreme in Britain now. London Fashion Week, which finished a week ago, had a vastly higher profile than in previous years. The grande dame of punk, Vivienne Westwood, was lured back after eight years away, and Prada, the hottest fashion house in the

world these past three years, dropped in for the first time, and threw the week's best party. Media coverage had been so enormous that fashion editors on the broadsheets began to fear overkill, and started pacing themselves. Milan, accordingly, has passed practically unnoticed. The frocks are just wide enough to make the front pages. The wheels of commerce revolve, the human cogs do their stuff.

But this explanation leaves all the important questions begging. Why are the V&A's costume galleries by far the most popular in the museum? Why did more than 100,000 people stream through their *Street Style* exhibition two years ago? What sort of role does fashion play in our society?

On one level, the question is easily answered. Fashion is big

business; it is our fourth largest industry, according to Amy de la Haye, curator of the Victoria and Albert Museum's big new exhibition, *The Cutting Edge: 50 Years of British Fashion*, which opened last week. So the fashion shows are merely trade shows. The frocks are just wide enough to make the front pages. The wheels of commerce revolve, the human cogs do their stuff.

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Fashion's big strength is its unique combination of universality and instantaneity. We may be tone deaf, we may shut out newspapers and television and radio, but all of us put something on in the morning. Nearly all of us also enter into carnal relations at some point, and in the process notice, if only minimally, as we rip them off, what others are wearing. We all wear clothes, and we all have views about the clothes that others wear. Clothes are the most inti-

mate form of self-expression, and the only compulsory one. The message they convey may only be apathy, slovenliness and self-loathing, but it comes across with horrible clarity.

And we can change the mes-

sage in the time it takes to undress and dress again. In that fleeting interlude, we can re-create ourselves. This is fun for teenagers and confusing for an entire society as demonstrated by the Imperial War Museum's exhibition *Forties Fashions* and the Christian Dior *New Look*.

But most eloquent of all was undoubtedly the siren suit, which became as recognisable a trademark of Churchill as the big cigar. The one on display here is made of maroon velvet, expressing in a single garment urgency, commonsense and insouciant dandyism.

What the exhibition well

conveys is that at moments of national crisis, fashion is a very big gun in the national armoury - because it touches everybody. Fifty years on, fashion still carries a terrific voltage, but its function in society is drastically different.

The catwalk show is fashion's defining ritual. Fashion may,

as some believe, be the rock 'n' roll of the late 90s, but the fashion show is nothing like a rock 'n' roll concert. It may have the background music; it may have the improbable or grotesque out-of-the-way location beloved of performance or installation artists. It may require the range of scarves was produced, covered in patriotic and exhortatory

catchphrases - "Is your journey really necessary?" "Keep it under your hat," "We shall not flag or fail - we shall go on to the end". There was a dressing gown covered with maps of Britain and dotted with stirring slogans. "This demi-paradise" etc - from Shakespeare.

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expression as a concert of modern music. But in all essentials, it is like none of these.

Unlike all of the above, a fashion show usually happens just once. It is highly exclusive; witness the scenes of rampaging madmen outside Alexander McQueen's show in the Borough fruit and vegetable market last Friday as hundreds tried and failed to crash the gates.

Once admitted, you discover that seating is allocated in accordance with the strictest hierarchy; glossy magazine editors together, broadsheet fashion writers together, buyers together on the other side of the catwalk; foreign journalists together at the end.

Once seated, you wait and wait and wait; most of last week's London shows started abysmally late, some an hour or more later than scheduled. But once the thing finally gets going, it's all over in the blink of an eye. McQueen showed 100 outfits worn by some 30 models in 15 minutes. In that time, the buyers and the journalists had to absorb all the weird outfit flashing past their eyes, log their distinctive features and read judgments about them. It's a task that requires huge amounts of knowledge and experience and

inherent as of modern music. But in all essentials, it is like none of these.

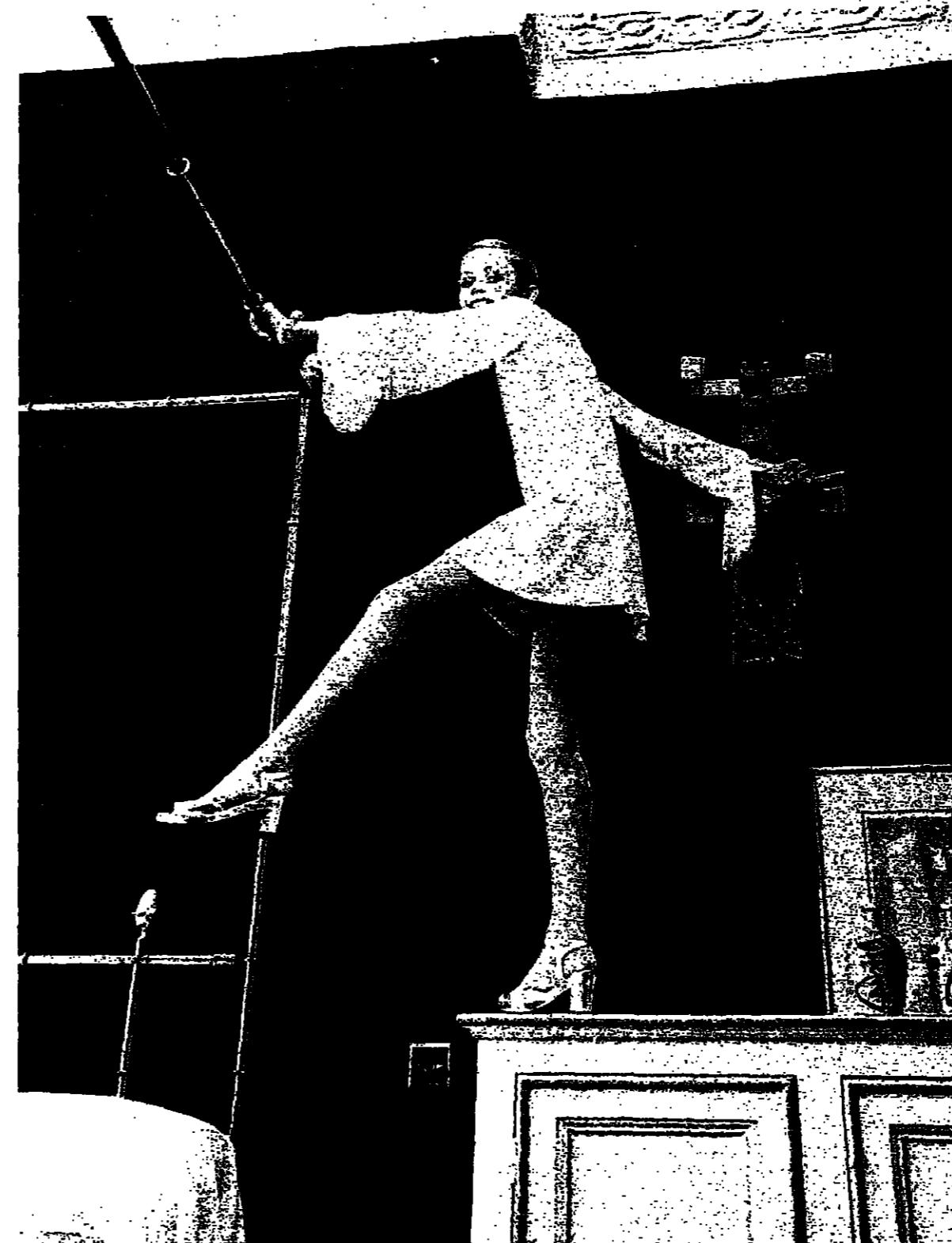
In his book *The Philosophy of Money* (1978), Georg Simmel wrote: "We call those objects valuable that resist our desire to possess them. Fashion is a highly sophisticated system of rationing. Without the whole panoply of *Fashion Weeks*, the crowds of wannabes rattling the gates, the cameras, the lights, the delays, the almost tangible glamour, what would you have left? Rocks and racks of clothes, more or less stupid or witty or charming, but all fatally lacking the magic ingredient that the business imbues the best of them with - unpossessability."

The Cutting Edge, the new exhibition at the V&A, celebrates 50 years of British fashion, from Norman Hartnell to McQueen and from Burberry to Zandra Rhodes. Elegantly staged in a high, salon-like space, it brilliantly complements the *Street Style* show. British fashion comes out of it looking in excellent shape.

But it leaves one aware that only half the story is being told. Here are the clothes, close enough to touch. One can look at them for as long as one likes: admire the tailoring, the fabrics, the play of forms and ideas. But what is missing is all the fizz and hype that surrounded them when they first entered our consciousness, all the froth and nonsense that forced us to pay attention to these kipper ties and miniskirts and Tommy Nutter suits in the first place, and set them on a high shelf of desirability.

Here they are, drained of mystique. One result is that many of the clothes don't look half as stupid and dated as one would expect. But equally they are shorn of their desirability. They simply hang there, inexcusably.

Rough



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18/3/97

Having just enquired about the relative sobriety of Spanish drinkers, I would like to relate an incident which detracts somewhat

from what I have just said, but was executed with some panache. Scene: a late-night bar serving hot chocolate textured like wet concrete. Protagonists: A man dressed as a clown flogging roses to lovers and a middle-aged man in a smart suit. A friendly discussion between these two took about three minutes to turn into a shouting match during which the clown tried desperately to lift the tension by making funny noises and squeezing his nose. The man in the suit smashed a rose to pieces on the bar and looked as if he was going to floor the clown.

Result: very big barman grabbed besotted drunk by scruff of neck and did a real Wild West saloon kick up the door. Clown was shaken, and may now think twice about his selling technique.

Road rage is alive and well in Germany, as experienced by my brother this week. Having suffered the tailgating, headlight-flashing attentions of a very flash Merc on the Autobahn, he pulled over to let it past, only to draw up behind it in a traffic jam. At this point, two blokes jumped out, ran to my brother's car

and opened the door. One took a swing at him, nearly planting a real scorch right on his nose. Who were these guys? Neo-nazis? Yobbo lads? No, they were two very respectable-looking men in their late 40s in suits. This could be the year of the middle-aged man frenzy.

I hope that a season of plays at the Battersea Arts Centre directed by four theatre critics may open the arts to get as good as they give for a change. All

performers have, at one time or another, been given what they consider to be a vicious personal review which has nothing to do with the performance they gave. I call upon Garry Bushell, that Levin woman from the *Mail*

money from providing cleaning services to the NHS, which everyone knows accepts the cheapest deal going to save dosh. Sounds like a template for the rest of government policy.

Mr Evans has at least said he is sorry to Virginia Bottomley for her "dead from the neck up" comment and she has accepted his "gallant and elegant" apology. So she is dead from the neck up, then.

Another motor-mouth's wrath on the airwaves has met with severe disapproval. Danny Baker's strong opinions have proved a bit too much for Radio Five, who have given him the heave-ho. I would say that Danny Baker has proved to be more than a match for the people who phone in to his programme, who, by the very act of picking up the receiver, prove that they hold strong opinions themselves. This is bickering-in-the-pub territory, and where sport, politics or religion are involved, it is going to get out of hand. At least Danny Baker does not tend to express racist opinions in front of schoolchildren. No, we leave that to our politicians.



On Sunday and several others

too numerous and revolting to mention to pop down to the Comedy Store late show and give me 10 minutes of their best jokes. Oh, what joy that would be.

David Evans seems to be a bit of a gift for the Labour Party, and although his views are outrageous to the point of being funny, it makes me wonder how someone like Mr Evans has got as far as he has without his constituents booting him out well before now. Some unfortunate group of people are represented in Parliament by this buffoon, and the more one sees of these right-wing MPs, the more one despairs for the human race. One thing that should be borne in mind is that Mr Evans made his

Low church

Is George Carey out of favour because he's into tambourines and singing?

david aaronovitch

A bad week for the Government: an awful week for the Church of England. First, the Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, has not been asked to officiate at the confirmation of 14-year-old Prince William tomorrow. And then, the church's new Easter campaign – which was to use the logo of the *X-Files*, the "cult TV hit" (newspaper talk for very popular television series), plus an adapted slogan, "The Truth Is Here" – has had to be ditched for reasons of copyright. All of which further stirs – does it not? – the growing criticism of England's established church as bumbling, ineffectual and uncertain.

The Prince and Princess of Wales don't care for Carey. They have given the confirming job to the Bishop of London, the bearded Rt Rev Richard Chartres – an opponent of the ordination of women (too many breasts, apparently) – and a believer in the need to rediscover the power of prayer and worship. This is ecclesiastical code for not doing too much to encourage gays or women. There is no record of what Prince William thinks of this choice. Indeed, we have no idea what Prince William believes. He may even be a secret Satanist.

But what extraordinary sit has joined the Waleses together in animosity towards the Archbishop? After all, what God has renuster, let no man reunite. Is it because Carey is into tambourines and singing? Because he calls the Queen Mum "dear"? Because he lacks the pallor of the Oxford library, or the manners of High Table?

Poor George. Even his name is against him. Was there, in *Snow White*, an eighth-spiritual dwarf? In line behind Doc, Bashful, Happy, Sleepy, Grumpy, Dopey and Sneezy, we may find Carey, the compassionate, slightly vague dwarf? Poor George, whose fate is to be praised by William Rees-Mogg as possessing a "personality with a steady rather than a dramatic pulling power", who is (in Rees-Mogg's view) an "Aunt Ethel" Archishop.

Is it all his fault, or the sorry pass arrived at by the church he leads? It is, after all, a "broad church". But what kind of a ral-



lying call is this? Come on in – everybody is welcome! But how much more attractive is a creed that says, "Come in, you're one of the fortunate few – all the others are going to burn!"

And what can you do with a church where all the most intelligent people spend much of their time disputing its tenets? Several Bishops believe that the Book of Revelations is "pretty pathological", that the virgin birth is nonsense, that the resurrection is a myth. The more theology gets discussed in the Church of England, the less religious people become.

How can you feel flame in your heart for an institution whose greatest disputes involve columnists from the *Daily Telegraph* accusing bishops (as one did this week) of being in a "terrible state of inconsistency"? You have come before this Holy Court charged with the monstrous and unnatural crime of inconsistency. Before the monks set flame to the faggots, have you anything to say?

When they are not launching ill-fated trendy campaigns, cosy up to gays, re-stringing their acoustic guitars and questioning the faith, they are to be found in territorial disputes that make Barchester Towers look like the Koran. Take Lincoln, where the Bishop won't pray in his own cathedral because of a vicious dispute between a Dean and a Canon. What a mess!

And thank God for it. Thank God that it is so uncertain, inconsistent, mixed and muddled; that it has absorbed the energies and spiritual feelings of the religious among us. That there are no miracles. No shrouds. No milky statuary. No smiting. No purges. No fiery crosses. No inquisitions. No flagellation. No dipping Jews or burning heretics. No such thing as heresy. No crusades. No bloody processions. No Church Militant.

Instead we have the Heritage Church. We have the fund for the upkeep of the church spire, Clarry's turn to do the flowers, "that was a lovely service, vicar", Hymn 147, the parish newsletter, prayers for the poor, prayers for the Prince of Wales.

The churches are full in Croatia and the mosques are packed in Tehran.

The admirable Dolly the sheep must have felt her cloned ears burning this week. She has seldom been off the air, seldom far from the Comment columns, the Leader pages or the Letters to the Editor.

What has intrigued me is the process by which invited contributors to the broadcast debates on such delicate matters are chosen. Some of them are experts in the field, as you would expect and as is right and proper. Others are distinguished scholars of moral or legal philosophy, which is equally appropriate.

Both these categories of person have been invited in their own right, because of their expert knowledge or their proven ability to think intelligently and express themselves clearly. The arguments they have with each other are usually illuminating and rewarding.

But there is another category of obligatory guest. There is the inevitable "representative" of the so-and-so "community"; and, of course, we mustn't forget the "voice" from the such-and-such "tradition". Not to mince words, the religious lobby. Lobbies in the plural, I should say, because all the religions have their point of view, and they all have to be represented lest their respective "communities" be slighted.

This has the incidental effect of multiplying the sheer number of people in the studio, with consequent consumption of not waste, of time. It also, I believe, often has the effect of lowering the level of expertise and intelligence. This is only to be expected, given that these spokesmen are chosen not because of their own qualifications in the field, or as thinkers, but simply because they represent a particular section of the community.

Out of good manners I shall not mention names, but this week I have experienced public discussions of cloning with several prominent religious leaders, and it has not been edifying. One of the most eminent of these spokesmen, recently elevated to the House of Lords, got off to a flying start by refusing to shake hands with the women in the studio, apparently for fear that they might be menstruating or otherwise "unclean".

They took the insult graciously, and with the "respect" always bestowed on religious prejudice (but no other kind of prejudice). The spokesman then, when asked what harm cloning might do, answered that atomic bombs were harmful. No disagreement there, but the discussion was in fact supposed to be about cloning.

Since it was his choice to shift the discussion to atomic bombs, perhaps he knew more about physics than about biology? But no, having delivered himself of the daring falsehood that Einstein split the atom, he switched with confidence to geological history. He made the telling point that, since God laboured six days and then rested on the seventh, scientists too, ought to know when to call a halt.

Now, either he really believed that the world was made in six days, in which case his ignorance alone disqualifies him from being taken seriously.

Or, as the presenter charitably suggested, he intended the point purely as an allegory – in which case it was a lousy allegory.

Sometimes in life it is a

good idea to stop; sometimes it is a good idea to go on. The trick is to decide when to stop. The allegory of God resting on the seventh day cannot, in itself, tell us whether we have reached the right point to stop in some particular case. As such, the six-day-creation story is empty. As history, it is false. So why bring it up?

The representative of a rival religion on the same panel was frankly confused. He feared that a human clone would lack individuality. It would not be a whole, separate human being but a mere soulless automaton.

When one of the scientists mildly suggested that he might be hurting the feelings of identical twins, he said that identical

twins were a quite different case. Why? Because they occur naturally, rather than under artificial conditions. Once again, no disagreement about that. But weren't we talking about "individuality", and whether clones are "whole human beings" or soulless automata?

This religious spokesman seemed simply unable to grasp that there were two separate arguments going on: first,

whether clones are autonomous individuals (in which case the analogy with identical twins is inescapable and his fear groundless); and second, whether there is something objectionable about artificial interference in the natural

On a different panel, this time on radio, yet another religious leader was similarly perplexed by identical twins. He too had theological grounds for fearing that a clone would not be a separate individual and would therefore lack "dignity".

He was swiftly informed of the undisputed scientific fact that identical twins are clones of each other with the same genes, exactly like Dolly the sheep except that Dolly's clone is older. Did he really mean to say that identical twins (and we all know some) lack the dignity of separate individuality? His reason for denying the relevance of the twin analogy was even odder than the previous one. Indeed it was transparently self-contradictory.

He had great faith, he informed us, in the power of nurture over nature. Nurture is why identical twins are really different individuals. When you get to know a pair of twins, he pointed out triumphantly, they even look a bit different.

Er, quite so. And if a pair of clones were separated by 50 years, wouldn't their respective natures be even more different? Haven't you just shot yourself in your theological foot? He just didn't get it – but, after all, he hadn't been chosen for his ability to follow an argument.

Religious lobbies, spokesmen of "traditions" and "communities" enjoy privileged access not only to the media but to influential committees of the great and the good, to the House of Lords (as I mentioned above), and to boards of school governors.

Their views are regularly sought, and heard with exaggerated "respect", by parliamentary committees. Religious spokesmen and spokeswomen enjoy an inside track to influence and power which others have to earn through their own ability or expertise.

What is the justification for this? Maybe there is a good reason, and I'm ready to be persuaded by it. But, on the face of it, isn't there more justification for choosing expert witnesses for their knowledge and accomplishments as individuals than because they represent some group or class of person? Come to think of it, in the light of all those worries about lack of individuality among clones, isn't there a touch of irony here? Maybe even a useful allegory? Ah, now, you're talking.

The writer is Professor of the Public Understanding of Science at Oxford University.

Dolly and the cloth-heads

by Richard Dawkins



Religious lobbies have an inside track to influence and power: But, as their contribution to the debate on animal cloning shows, their views are a waste of time

Rough guide to Blair's tartan trouble

Labour faces an army of trouble-makers within its own ranks in Scotland. Unusually, it now finds itself less popular there than south of the Tweed. By Douglas Fraser

little to help. Disillusion in Scotland's huge public sector workforce has set

associated with Labour's home rule wing, hadn't even been told, and he resigned.

A threatened rebellion by Labour's

Scottish executive was quelled only by a desperate plea for party unity. Fac-

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by hastily shifting ground again to pro-

pose two referendums, before and

after legislation – though within

week he had U-turned again, increas-

ing the chances that early May will see

him return to the relative calm of

European affairs at which he excelled.

Although the leadership prevailed,

the episode left a trail of ill will, not

least with those who had won. A

group emerged earlier this year, con-

siderately named The Network,

dedicated to ensuring such an emba-

rrassment could never happen again.

Though few admit to membership,

it was deemed to be behind an attempt

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Leadership loyalists suggest this

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and blunt the tawny tax attacks. But

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business & city

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BUSINESS & CITY EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

Littlewoods backs out of Freemans deal

Nigel Cope

Littlewoods yesterday unexpectedly backed out of its £395m deal to buy the Freemans home shopping business from Sears after learning that the Selfridges to British Shoe group had received approaches from other bidders.

The leading candidate is N Brown, the Manchester mail order company controlled by Sir David Alliance who has made no secret of his interest in acquiring Freemans. Though other possible buyers could include Pinault Printemps-La Redoute

which owns the Empire stores operation in the UK and Otto Versand, the German group which owns Grattan, N Brown is considered by analysts as being the most serious bidder.

Littlewoods withdrew from the fray after it was told that Sears was active negotiations with other parties. Littlewoods had insisted on exclusive negotiation rights and was thought to be angered by Sears actions.

Sears said it had received approaches from "a number of parties". Though N Brown is the frontrunner it is understood that

Lancia Trust, the tiny investment vehicle controlled by 31-year-old Andrew Regan had been interested though it is not clear if he has made a formal approach.

There is speculation that any deal in the deal could spell the end for Sears' chief executive, Liam Stroo, who has been under pressure from institutions frustrated at the group's lacklustre performance.

He has been keen to sell Freemans quickly in order to fulfil his promise of returning £410m to shareholders. The Littlewoods deal hit a snag when it

was unexpectedly referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission last month.

Mr Strong emphasised the need for speed yesterday: "It remains the board's intention to achieve the price expected for Freemans and to return the cash to ordinary shareholders. We are committed to achieving this in the shortest possible timeframe."

Though Sears shares fell 0.5p to \$1.5p on the news, analysts said the development should be viewed positively. "Initially it seems to suggest that Sears

can't close deals. But really it is that Sears has committed itself to returning £410m to shareholders and is looking at the best way to achieve that."

Littlewoods said it was disappointed with the outcome but said it was still interested in buying Freemans if Sears' other options collapsed. "We still want to do this deal with them but feel that if they did not want to negotiate with us exclusively then there was no reason to pursue it."

Littlewoods has informed the MMC that its discussions with Sears have been terminated.

However, it is still possible that the MMC will continue its investigation. It can ask the DTI to lay aside a merger inquiry if it is satisfied that the merger has been terminated. With no formal confirmation yet received from Littlewoods, the MMC said that "at the moment we still have an on-going inquiry".

Littlewoods said the collapse of its deal had no implications for the proposed sale it announced earlier this week of its high street stores which it is hoping will fetch up to £500m. However, analysts said the

£1bn-plus bid for the Littlewoods empire in 1995 in conjunction with Iceland. Though rejected by the group's family shareholders, that deal would have seen N Brown take the home shopping division, with Iceland retaining the high street stores while the Littlewoods pool business would have been sold.

N Brown has a market share of slightly more than 4 per cent, and it is unlikely that its purchase of Freemans, which has 8 per cent, would attract the attention of the competition authorities.

The company mounted a

Cable firms steal a march on Murdoch

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

The cable industry took a huge step towards consolidation yesterday when the three largest operators announced a supplier of set-top boxes for planned digital television services, leapfrogging a similar decision widely expected by satellite rival BSkyB.

The move brings together Telewest Communications, the largest cable company, with Bell Cablemedia and Nynex CableComms in a broad collaboration which will involve combined purchasing and greater co-operation over marketing strategies.

The three partners have chosen General Instrument Corporation, a large US electronics company, to supply the set-top boxes, which enable customers

to decode digital TV signals.

Telewest said General Instrument planned to supply hundreds of thousands of boxes by the end of 1998.

Further suppliers may be asked to sub-contract manufacturing later, though the announcement is a setback for Pace Micro Technology, the small UK company which had hoped to sell its digital decoder to the cable companies and BSkyB.

Significantly, the three cable operators also pledged to continue the partnership after Bell and Nynex merge with Cable & Wireless' telephone subsidiary Mercury later this year to form a £5bn cable giant, C&W Communications. Other cable companies are also likely to join the alliance over the next few months, including Comcast and

Second setback for Sky's German hopes

BSkyB is pulling out of a planned digital pay-TV venture with Germany's Kirch Group. Analysts said this was a further setback to BSkyB's hopes of dominating the European digital pay-TV market, writes John Willcock.

The breakdown of the joint venture is BSkyB's second failed attempt to enter Germany, Europe's biggest media market.

Separately, F-SkyB has not explained why it has delayed awarding contracts for the supply of digital TV decoders for its UK digital pay-TV service, planned to begin by the end of the year.

BSkyB's shares fell as much as 4.2 per cent in early trading before recovering to close at 616.5p, down 7p. The company, which is 40 per cent owned by Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, said the companies ended talks by mutual agreement "because of a failure to agree on a number of

fundamental issues." It did not disclose further details.

The aborted venture with Kirch casts a shadow over BSkyB's attempts to move into digital satellite TV in Europe after it failed earlier to agree terms with Kirch's rival Bertelsmann.

There has been a year-long scramble among TV broadcasters in Europe to seize control of a market made possible by digital TV technology that promises many more channels and bigger revenues.

BSkyB wanted access to the 1.5 million subscribers to Premiere, a German pay-TV movie channel owned by Bertelsmann. Kirch and Canal Plus of France, it planned to buy shares from Bertelsmann and Canal Plus, which each own 37.5 per cent. In return, Kirch said it would provide the network for Bertelsmann's Club RTL, a package of digital TV programming to begin in the autumn.

Matthew Horsman, media analyst with stockbrokers Henderson Crosthwaite, said: "This is consistent with Sky's plan in offering Sky programming alongside other channels.

Mathew Horsman, media analyst with stockbrokers Henderson Crosthwaite, said: "This is consistent with Sky's plan in offering Sky programming alongside other channels.

Morgan Grenfell now owned by Deutsche Bank, is Lonrho's financial adviser and Sir John remains chairman of Deutsche

General Cable, offering a single digital alternative to BSkyB.

A spokesman for Telewest said: "We are working very closely with the new executive team at C&W Communications. We are now working together on other services, including a joint electronic programme guide which steers customers through the new services on offer."

Telewest said one big advantage of its service was that customers would not have to buy the boxes, instead paying the cost of the equipment as part of a monthly subscription. BSkyB intends to ask customers to pay about £200 for their boxes, a price subsidised to encourage a strong take-up of the service.

When the service begins in October or November, cable customers will be offered many more television channels than the average of 50 on analogue cable TV, along with internet access and video-on-demand. Telewest said it was talking to banks, supermarkets and other retailers about further interactive services to come in 1998.

News of the supply deal came as a surprise to industry experts, who had thought BSkyB would be the first group to announce a firm agreement to supply set-top boxes for its digital satellite service, planned to start towards the end of this year. Rupert Murdoch, head of News Corporation, BSkyB's largest shareholder, is thought to have chaired a board meeting at the group in London last Tuesday to finalise a deal.

Analysts played down the rivalry with BSkyB, arguing that the new digital cable service will follow existing cable policy in offering Sky programming alongside other channels.

Sir John Craven says there is no conflict of interest in his new position

Sir John, 56, former chief executive of the investment bank Morgan Grenfell, will take over the £120,000 a year post from the current Lonrho chairman, Sir John Leahy, after the company's annual meeting on 26 March.

Morgan Grenfell, now owned by Deutsche Bank, is Lonrho's financial adviser and Sir John remains chairman of Deutsche

Lonrho, the mining, hotels and trading group, yesterday completed the overhaul of its board following the departure of the German financier Dieter Bock by appointing a senior banker.

Sir John Craven, as non-executive chairman, writes Michael Harrison.

Sir John, 56, former chief executive of the investment bank Morgan Grenfell, will take over the £120,000 a year post from the current Lonrho chairman, Sir John Leahy, after the company's annual meeting on 26 March.

Morgan Grenfell, now owned by Deutsche Bank, is Lonrho's financial adviser and Sir John remains chairman of Deutsche

anticipate that will continue to be the case."

Sir John, who has several other directorships, said he would not be devoting a fixed proportion of his time to Lonrho but would be available to its chief executive Nick Morrell whenever necessary. His role will be in help in strategic development.

Nick Morrell is expected to outline his plans for the group in May or June after the European Com-

mission has ruled on whether the South African mining group Anglo American can keep its 28 per cent stake in Lonrho.

Mr Bock agreed to sell his 18.8 per cent stake in Lonrho to Anglo for £257m last October and step down as chief executive. Earlier this week Mr Bock severed all links with Lonrho by resigning as non-executive deputy chairman.

With the Metropole hotel chain sold to Stakis and the Princess hotel business up for auction, the plan is to demerge Lonrho's African trading businesses and other non-mining interests this summer. But these plans depend on whether Brussels blocks Anglo's investment to which the problem related.

Gas suppliers split on date for Scotland

Chris Godsmark

Independent gas suppliers competing for a slice of British Gas's business are split over whether to bring forward the next phase of domestic competition to a new start date in October, it emerged yesterday.

The Gas Forum, which represents most independent suppliers in the residential and commercial markets, has written to Lord Fraser, Energy Minister, urging the Government to offer competition to a further 2.5 million homes later this year.

Roger Turner, managing director of United Gas and a chairman of the Forum, said the plan was to introduce competition to the whole of Scotland in October.

The move would need an amendment to 1995 legislation which says nationwide competition cannot take place earlier than 1998. The target preferred by TransCo, the pipeline business of British Gas, is for no further trials before next April.

The letter explains: "Technically adding another region during 1997 would require an order to be laid before Parliament and we believe that the government should take this necessary action in the very near future."

Mr Turner said: "It makes so much logistical sense to keep up

European inflation in January						
	Harmont	Holloway	Do they measure inflation?	Measure	Method	Official CPI %
Belgium	2.2	2.3	✓			
Denmark	2.6	2.7	✓			
Germany	1.7	1.8	✓			
Greece	6.6	6.8	✗			
Spain (p)	2.8	2.9	✗			
France	1.8	1.8	✓			
Ireland (p)	1.9	n/a	✓			
Italy	2.6	2.7	✓			
Luxembourg	1.3	1.3	✓			
Netherlands	1.8	2.3	✓			
Austria (p)	1.6	1.9	✓			
Portugal	2.8	3.3	✓			
Finland	0.9	0.6	✓			
Sweden	1.3	-0.1	✓			
UK	2.1	3.1	✓			
EU	2.2	(p) provisional				

Italy and Spain fail EMU inflation test

Yvette Cooper

Four European member states, including Italy and Spain, would fail to qualify for economic and monetary union on the basis of their current inflation records, according to new figures released yesterday from Brussels.

The data casts fresh doubt on whether the Italian economy in particular will be in strong enough shape for the lira to join in a single currency from 1999.

The critical question for Italy, Spain and Portugal will be whether they can get their inflation performance to converge towards their European partners during the next twelve months. EU leaders are ex-

pected to meet in April 1998 to decide which nations will be in the first group to adopt the euro.

According to the Maastricht Treaty, member states joining EMU must have an average rate of inflation that does not exceed the inflation performance of the three best performing countries by more than 1.5 percentage points.

Eleven out of the 15 member states currently meet this criteria, according to figures issued by the European Commission. However, Spain, Portugal and Greece fail the EMU inflation test, on the basis of new harmonised measures of inflation.

Italy meets the Maastricht criteria if only one month's figures are taken into account. But

on the European Commission's preferred method of defining the Maastricht criteria to consider twelve months of data, then Italy still fails the inflation test.

The new EU inflation measure, the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices, calculates inflation on a comparable basis, by measuring the price changes of the same goods in each country. At the moment, national indices are based on very different baskets of goods, and on different statistical methods to calculate averages. The discrepancies between national measures and the new EU index are widest for Sweden and the UK. The HICP measures UK inflation at 2.1 per cent in January, whilst the most com-

monly used UK measure, RPI-X was 3.1 per cent.

New HICP for Germany shows inflation at 1.7 per cent, compared to the German consumer price index which stands at 1.8 per cent. For France, the national and EU measures of inflation coincide at 1.8 per cent.

The three lowest inflation countries in January were Sweden, Finland and Luxembourg. An unweighted average of their inflation performance is 1.2 per cent, putting the Maastricht ceiling of 2.6 per cent. Italian inflation averaged over the last twelve months is 3.7 per cent, well above the criteria if measured on a monthly basis.

A spokesman for economics and monetary affairs minister Yves-Thibault de Silguy said: "Using the harmonised index you get all the countries except Portugal, Italy, Spain and Greece qualifying."

However, a postscript to the letter said it did not represent the views of three large suppliers: Quadrant, run by Esso and Shell, Mobil and Calorite, a joint venture between Calor and Texaco. Calorite, which claims to have grabbed the most customers in trials so far, described the letter as "irresponsible".

Neil Lambert, Calorite's joint general manager, said he was "frankly very annoyed" by the letter. "We think the next trial should take place as early as possible once the systems run by TransCo are able to handle it. This letter is saying we should go whether the systems are in place or not."

Mr Lambert said he saw no reason to disbelieve claims by TransCo that it needed a crucial few months breathing space to complete new computer systems which would support customer databases to track households as they switched supplier.

Yesterday competition was extended to a further 900,000 homes in Kent and Sussex, on top of the 1.1 million in trials in the South-west of England.

STOCK MARKETS						
Dow Jones*		Nikkei		London		
Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	1996/97 High	1996/97 Low	Yield (%)

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Foreign Exchange Rates

OTHER SPOT RATES			Country	Sterling	Dollar
Country	Sterling	Dollar			
Austria	184963	120541	Oman	0.6208	0.3889
Brazil	15975	10527	Pakistan	64.6288	40.0787
China	13.3768	8.2557	Philippines	42.4761	26.3432
Egypt	54784	34.000	Portugal	277.772	172.3
Finland	82278	51.298	Qatar	5.8672	3.64
Ghana	297340	184.500	Russia	9179.96	5653.01
Greece	434.730	26.9500	South Africa	7019	446
India	57.8001	35.8550	Taiwan	44.3821	275.3
Kuwait	0.4899	0.3038	UAE	5.2943	3.67
Nigeria	129129	80.0000			

Tourist Rates

Tourist Rates		as at 7.3.57	
C. Boys	E. Boys	E. Boys	
Australia(Dollars)	1.9900	France(Francs)	9 0400
Austria(Schillings)	18.6500	Germany(Marks)	2 6825
Belgium(Francs)	55.3500	Greece(Drachmae)	424 0000
Canada(Dollars)	2.1450	Hong Kong(Dollars)	12.1700
Cyprus(Pounds)	0.8000	Ireland(Pounds)	1.0025
Denmark(Kroner)	10.3000	Italy(Lira)	2892.0000
Holland(Guilder)	3.0225	Japan(Yen)	194 1500
	2.9222	Malta(Liri)	0 6045

Interest Rates

Interest Rates		Discount Lombard	25.0%	Discount Fed Funds	5.00%	Discount Spain
UK Base	6.00%	Canada	4.50%	10-Day Repo	6.00%	10-Day Repo (Ave)
France Intervention	3.15%	Prime	4.75%	Sweden	5.25%	Japan
Italy Discount	7.5%	Discount Denmark	5.00%	Belgium	4.10%	Discount Belgium
Netherlands Advances	2.70%	US	3.25%	Lombard	0.50%	Discount Lombard
Germany		Prime	8.75%			

Bond Yields as of 7.3.97								
Country	5 yr	Yield %	10 yr	yield %	Country	5 yr	Yield %	10 yr
UK	7.0%	6.94	7.50%	7.30	Netherlands	8.75%	4.85	6.0%
US	6.25%	6.44	6.50%	6.61	Spain	7.9%	6.30	7.35%
Japan	6.0%	1.61	2.9%	2.43	Italy	7.75%	7.12	7.75%
Australia	10.0%	7.49	6.75%	7.80	Belgium	9.0%	4.46	6.25%
Germany	8.0%	4.70	6.0%	5.67	Sweden	13.0%	5.57	6.50%
France	5.5%	4.58	5.5%	5.57	ECU OAT	6.0%	4.82	5.50%

Yields calculated on local basis. ** Denotes new to market.

Source: CSC Markets Research

Money Market Rates as at 7.3.97					
	0'Night	7 Day	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months
Interbank	5 1/2	5 1/2 - 6 1/4	5 1/2 - 6 1/4	6 1/2 - 6 1/4	5 1/2 - 6 1/4
Sterling CDs	-	-	-	-	8 1/2
Local Authority Deps	S 4	5 1/2	6 1/2	6 1/2	-
Discount Market Deps	5 1/2 -	5 1/2 -	-	-	6 1/2
Treasury Bills (Buy)	-	-	5 1/2 -	6 1/2	-
Dollar CDs	-	-	5.08	5.16	5.28

Liffe Financial Futures as at 7.3.97					
Contract		Settlement price	High/Low for day	EstConts traded	
Long Gil	(Mar 97)	111.28	112.07	111.27	4657
German Govt Bd	(Jun 97)	101.67	102.02	101.58	20125
Italian Bond	(Jun 97)	127.10	127.49	126.85	59515
Japan Govt Bd	(Mar 97)	126.94	126.94	126.82	996
5 Mth Sterling	(Mar 97)	93.75	93.75	93.73	14623
	(Jun 97)	93.57	93.60	93.53	31935
	(Sep 97)	93.57	93.70	93.53	1870
3 Mth Eurodollar	(Apr 97)	96.76	96.76	96.74	40886
	(Jun 97)	96.75	96.76	96.74	7552
3 Mth Eurobonds	(Mar 97)	92.68	92.70	92.65	24533
	(Jun 97)	92.70	92.75	92.65	428
3 Mth Euroyen	(Mar 97)	92.11	92.15	92.06	1461
	(Jun 97)	92.11	92.15	92.06	1926
3 Mth Eurocurrencies	(Mar 97)	98.14	98.20	98.12	753
	(Jun 97)	98.14	98.21	98.12	942
3 Mth ECU	(Mar 97)	98.75	98.77	98.76	942
	(Jun 97)	98.75	98.79	98.77	15933
FTSE 100	(Mar 97)	4378.0	4390.0	4374.0	17
FTSE 250	(Mar 97)	4710.0	4710.0	4700.0	

Liffe FTSE Index Options

	Settlement price: 4396	closing offer price		
Series	4300	4350	4400	4450
Mar	99.16	59.29	30.51	11.84
Apr	130.45	97.62	66.83	41.10
May	155.70	123.87	93.10	69.13
Jun	186.88	152.10	120.24	95.15

Commodities

INDUSTRIAL METALS - London Metal Exchange						LME Stock
	Volume	3 wks	Cash	Stamps		
Aluminum HG	1652.5-53.5	1681.0-82.0	56563	890175		890175
Aluminum Alloy	1533.0-38.0	1555.0-56.0	874			73220
Copper A	2436.0-39.0	2378.0-79.0	52879			216575
Lead	578.0-9.0	577.0-8.0	12081			102520
Nickel	8045-8055	8145-8155	11183			45600
Tin	5840-5850	5855-5900	3688			10220
Zinc	1225.0-26.0	1241.0-41.5	19799			470650
Saleman Conversion charge rates.		£/ton	£/ton	£/ton	£/ton	1 6083
PRECIOUS METALS						
pm ft/oz	\$	£	Coins	\$	£	Krugerrands
Platinum	382.0	236.7	South Africa	374	232	Sovs
Palladium	1465	90.75	Britannia 5 oz	192	119	Nobles
Silver spot	518.5	322.0	Britannia 25 oz	93	58	Maple Leaf
Gold Buñm	363.1	219.3	Britannia 10 oz	45	28	
AGRICULTURAL						
	Coffee		Barley		Potatoes	
Cocoa	Liffe	\$/tonne	Liffe	Chlorine	Liffe	Chlorine
Liffe	Chlorine					
Mar	917	Mar	1747	Mar	90.75	Apr
May	932	Mar	1730	May	91.75	May
Jul	946	Jul	1730	Sept	90.75	Jun
Vol:	6051	Vol:	6210	Vol:	12	Vol.
White Sugar	Freight		Wheat		Can	
Liffe	Shonne	Liffe \$10/tonne d	Liffe	Etonne	CBDI #	
May	307.10	Feb	1485	Mar	97.35	Hi-Lo
Aug	305.70	Mar	1570	May	100.00	304.25-27
Oct	301.60	Vol:	1540	Jul	102.50	303.5-5
Vol	1084	Index	253	Vol:	625	302.5-
Other Softs (Agricultural)						
Mar	Mazze (No.3) 1"	/tonne	108.75	May-Jul	Soya Oil	Pl
Mar/Apr	Copra (1)	/tonne	145.0	Mar-Apr	Coconut Oil	(1)
Mar	Cotton (NY) USCent/lb		73.00	Mar	Sunflower Oil	
Jun	Wool	Acent/kg	und	May-Jul	Rapeseed Oil	
	"Rubber"	MoCent/lb	305.5	Feb/Mar	Groundnut Oil	

Apr	HEDGING	INTEREST	Origin	Source:TEC - carry charges - The Financial And Economic Review - N Europe Source: FT inform	
ENERGY					
Brent Crude	\$/barrel	Gassell	\$/tonnes	WTI	
IEP	5.30pm	*chg Yr ago	IEP	close *chg	
Apr	19.55	+0.17	Mar	164.75 +2.75 Apr	
May	19.36	+0.16	Apr	166.00 +2.55 May	
Juni	19.11	+0.20	May	167.50 +2.00 Jun	
Vol:	26985	Index: 19.51	Vol:	20325 Jul	
Since 5.30pm previous day 100 spot prices show average to week					
Source: ICE-London					
COMMODITY INDICES					
*GSCI Indices	Base date	+Spot	4-Day Chg	Dec 31st	%Ytd Chg
Index	1970=100	188.28	-1.25	215.26	-12.07
Agricultural	1970=100	251.83	-0.02	231.23	+8.91
Energy	1983=100	65.73	-1.72	85.86	-23.44
	3.13				

100 Largest Insurance Firms

100 Largest Insurance Firms

14-50	155	17	Abbey Managed Fund	148.5	156.4
14-50	156.2	8	Abbey National Managed Fund	150.3	168.8
14-50	156.2	8	Abbey National UK Equity Fund	150.3	168.8
14-50	156.5	44	Abbey Equity Ass'rs Fund	157.1	2157.0
14-50	156.6	42	Abbey Managed Fund - S.A.	1286.9	1364.5

254.00	102.4	82	Albany Agency Acc.	1265.9	1354.5	Merchant Needs Fund
244.30	102.4	82	Albany Multiple Inv Acc S3	25.70	27.10	Medicaid Balance
185.1	102.4	82	Albany Dunbar Distribution Board	1817.3	1913.2	Midland USA Eqaul
202.29	104.0	70	Albany Dunbar Econ Acc	43.40	43.40	National Growth Managed
5	104.7	51	Albany Dunbar Gen of High Income Ser Inc	321.20	321.20	National Security Mngd
			Albany Dunbar Managed Acc	1276.1	1448.4	Nationwide USA Eqaul
			Albany Dunbar Property Acc	571.03	706.40	Nationwide USA Eqaul
			Albany Dunbar Equity Inv Acc	900.20	947.50	Northeast Union Eqaul Inv
			ABA Agency & Law Bd Ser 6	105.50	112.10	Northeast Union Unlisted Man

100	tangs	AXA Equity & Law Der Ser 6 AXA Equity & Law M Inc Ser 6 AXA Equity & Law UK Eq Ser 6 Bentley's Equity Acc	100.00 100.00 100.00 100.00	1441.20 1441.20 1441.20 147.5	NPPI Unlisted NPPI Managed Peer Equity Net Peer Managed NPPI Unlisted NPPI Managed Peer Equity Net Peer Managed
98.8	1.28				
11.2	1.23				

123	Barclays Equity Acc	475.5	45.5	Prudential Managed Prudential Managed Mgrd Svc
094	Barclays International Acc	653.5	66.5	
097	Barclays Managed Acc	563.5	56.5	
098	Black Horse Income Fund Ser 2	557.1	100.5	Royal Life Managed
097	Black Horse Mngd Inv S2	559.14	528.5	Royal Scottish Growth Man
097	Canada Managed Ser 2	562.0	457.5	Royal Scottish Inv Equity
095	Cashflow Equity	541.1	537.5	Scottish Available Equity
092	CarPro Supplemental	556.7	510.5	Scottish Assurance Management
114.5	Charity Fund	110.5	110.5	Scottish Educative Money
8				

148	15	CMU Penn Profit Bond	1185.0	2862.9	Scottish Equitable Mixed
148	15	Confederation Equity I	2044.8	5246.4	Scottish Life Managed
148	15	Commercial Union Managed	544.3	882.1	Scottish Mutual Safety
148	15	Commercial Union Eqt.	549.9	115.7	Scott Prov Inv Blue Chip
72.0	83		126.9		

720	10	Commercial Union Life Equitable	186.4	155.7	Scott Prov Inst Blue Chip
856	35	Commercial Union Wm Profit	204.4	174.7	Scott Prov Inst Wm Profit
915	11	Eagle Star Managers	171.98	179.98	Scotch Widows Investors
1044	8	Fidelity Performance	200.7	411.3	Scottish Widows Mutual
1071	53	Friends Provident Managed	545.4	574.2	Standard Equity
1112	21	Friends Provident UK Study	210.9	211.3	Standard European
823	66	Friends Provident Wm Profit	160.4	158.8	Standard Far East
1015	24	General Accident Wm Profit	267.9	1916.8	Standard Funds Invested

Gan Management	175.4	1417.8
GME Earth Acc.	789.9	561.9
GME International Acc.	847	881.6
GME Standard Acc.	798.2	144.7
H&H Savings Equity	78.1	86.8
H&H Strategic Managed Ser A	68.6	74.1
Ivy Life Global Macro Fund Ser 2	716.4	354.9
J. Rothschild UK Private Equity	194.6	357.1
Kingspan Infrastructure Fund Ser 1	134.5	100.0

J. HORN	Laurens Capital Up Mktg Acc	334.5	351.1	
	Laurens Managed Acc Ser 3	354.5	359.1	TSB Life Cap Maple Ltd
	Laurens UK Equity Acc	368.6	372.2	TSB Equity
	Legal & General Equity Acc	1543.0	1624.3	TSB Homeplus
	Legal & General International Acc	634.4	657.8	TSB Worldwide

sport

FESTIVAL FOCUS: Bradley takes the wrong course of action while another top rider aims to have the last laugh at Cheltenham

Dunwoody proves fitness for Flagship

Racing option for failed Cigar

JOHN COBB

If the bookmakers were offering odds about which will be the closest race of the Cheltenham Festival, then the Queen Mother Champion Chase would be the odds-on favourite. Klaire Davis and Viking Flagship, who jumped the final fence together last year, and between them have won the last three runnings of the race, are virtually inseparable at the head of the betting for next Wednesday's renewal, for which nine horses stood their ground yesterday.

Both Ladbrokes and William Hill have a slight preference in their lists for last year's winner, Klaire Davis, but Coral are unable to divide Arthur Moore's gelding and the David Nichol-

son-trained Viking Flagship, who was successful in 1994 and 1995. The firm quotes the pair at 9-4.

Ladbrokes report substantial backing for Strong Promise, conqueror of One Man in the Comet Chase at Ascot, and have cut him from 9-2 to 7-2.

Richard Dunwoody, who is due to partner Viking Flagship in the enforced absence of Adrian Maguire, made a successful return from injury at Sandown yesterday.

Dunwoody, who suffered a fractured sternum in a fall from Se More Business in the Racing Post Chase at Kempton 13 days ago, rode Friendship to victory for Nicky Henderson. "That was OK," Dunwoody said. "I've been running five miles a day and riding a bike for

15 to 20 minutes to get back to fitness."

The injury was sore last week but the time it is most painful is when I sneeze, cough or laugh. I can tell you exactly how many times I have sneezed or coughed in the last fortnight."

RICHARD EDMONDSON
NAP: Doctor (Sandown 4.05)
NB: Givetime (Chelmsford 1.45)

"Not so fortunate is Lorcan Wyer. Concussed following a fall from Thornton Gate at Doncaster last Saturday, Wyer also sustained ligament damage to his left shoulder.

The Irishman had hoped to resume riding at Catterick on

Wednesday, but his shoulder was still giving him trouble and he decided to delay his return until this weekend. However, the condition of his shoulder has not improved and the rider will now have to miss Cheltenham.

"My shoulder is still giving me trouble," Wyer said. "It is not too good and it will have to improve significantly before I start riding again. I don't know when that will be."

Graham Bradley, who partners Collier Bay, favourite for Tuesday's Champion Hurdle, received a seven-day suspension for taking the wrong course at Exeter yesterday. Importantly for the veteran jockey, the ban starts on Monday week rather than at the start of the Festival.

Bradley, riding second past

the post Carole's Crusader in the novices' chase, was adjudged by the stewards to have gone the wrong side of the fourth-last fence, which was dolted off.

"When you are out there and the adrenalin is up and you are trying to ride a finish, it is a bit different to sitting in the steward's room seeing it all in slow motion," Bradley said.

Tony McCoy, who was injured in a fall at Wincanton on Thursday, rode a double yesterday when partnering Font Ronne and Give And Take to victory for Martin Pipe in the first two races.

The jockey had been criticised by the trainer Ioby Balding for riding at the meeting. McCoy's mentor, urged the champion not to risk

suffering any more injury and give himself a break.

Yesterday Balding stressed: "What I said was in my opinion he should not be riding until Cheltenham, not that he should not be riding at Cheltenham. But I stand by the rest of what I said and I didn't think he should be going down to Exeter for the sort of ride he has there. He should be taking a few days off to put himself right for the Festival."

QUEEN MOTHER CHAMPION CHASE (Cheltenham, Weds 26 Mar) 5-1 Niall Davies & Wing Ringers, 7-2 Ask Tom, 8-2 Strong Promises, 10-1 Mr Paddy Power, 12-1 Mr Paddy Power, 14-1 Double Symphony, 20-1 Lord Dorset & Certainly Strong, 21-1 Peter Dore, 24-1 Viking Flagship, 2-1 Strong Promises, 5-1 Mr Paddy Power, 7-1 Mr Paddy Power, 10-1 Mr Paddy Power, 12-1 Double Symphony, 25-1 Certainly Strong, 40-1 Lord Dorset, 5-1 Niall Davies, 5-2 Wing Ringers, 4-1 Ask Tom, 5-1 Mr Paddy Power, 10-1 Mr Paddy Power, 12-1 Arctic Amazon, Certainly Strong & Double Symphony, 33-1 Lord Dorset.

do," Allen Paulson, who owned Cigar during his racing career, told the *Daily News* in New York. "I would like to keep him at my own farm [Brookside]. All I can say is that it's a shock. We were counting on his babies awful badly."

Cigar ended his career at the age of six as the horse that had won most prize-money in the history of horse-racing. He was retired to Ashford Stud in a sale valued at \$25m (£15m) after he finished third in the Breeders' Cup Classic.

It was his second consecutive loss and third in four races since the end of his record 16-race winning streak, which equalled the modern record set by Citation. The streak included a 10 out of 10 record in 1995.

Fertility problems for new stallions are not particularly unusual, but more frequently occur with younger horses that have perhaps not quite reached maturity.

One reason for such a problem is the stress caused by changing from a rigorous training regime to a more relaxed lifestyle. Several prominent stallions have recovered from such difficulties to lead active lives as successful stallions.

"We'll have to see what the insurance company want to

SUNDERLANDS IMPERIAL CUP – 10-YEAR-TALE									
1987	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
Rate of the favourites	8-2	2-1	5-4	11-8	1-8	6-6	6-6	6-6	6-6
Wager's place in betting	3-0	1-0	0-0	0-0	1-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0
Starting prices	10-1	10-4	3-1	20-1	15-1	9-2	6-4	33-1	6-1
Winning ages	6	5	6	5	7	6	8	5	6
Winning weight	10-3	10-1	10-0	10-3	10-8	10-4	10-0	10-7	10-2
Profit or loss in £1 stakes	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000
Percentage of winners placed 1st, 2nd & 3rd in last race	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%
Shortest-priced winner: Olympia 5-1 (1993)									
Longest-priced winner: Precious Boy 33-1 (1994)									
Top trainers: M Pipe – Travel Mystery (12/6), Olympia (9/6)									
Top jockey: L Wyer – Precious Boy (12/6) & Olympia (9/6)									

SANDOWN – 10-YEAR-TALE

HYPERNON'S TV TIPS

1.15: Richard Dunwoody resumes his partnership with SELATAN, whose third at Haydock a fortnight ago proved he is returning to form. **□□□**

1.45: General Wolfe has won five of his seven latest completed chases and will be strongly fancied here. He will be pushed, however, to give 2lb to the mud-lover GIVEN TIME who has been beaten just once in his five latest starts. Three weeks ago, Luke Harvey's mount was a course-and-distance winner in fine style.

2.15: What's The Verdict may well run in the Supreme Novices' Hurdle at Sandown on Saturday if winning here. That will come to a standstill if ROYAL SCIMITAR, a decent performer on the Flat.

taking few chances with his odds. A strong late challenge can be expected from Star Rage, but the best handicapped runner could be MR PERCY. Leighton Aspell's mount was an excellent second to Shadow Leader at Newbury last month and will be staying on strongly in the closing stages. **□□□**

4.45: Arneval has impressive form but there is a suspicion he will be fresh. DENVER BAY, up 4lb for winning over course and distance three weeks ago, can still take that.

Balding, riding second past

taking few chances with his odds. A strong late challenge can be expected from Star Rage, but the best handicapped runner could be MR PERCY. Leighton Aspell's mount was an excellent second to Shadow Leader at Newbury last month and will be staying on strongly in the closing stages. **□□□**

4.45: Doctor's credentials are formidable but the bookmakers are

GOING: Good. Right-hand course: seven testing fences along back straight: run-in of 30yd.

Course is 3,007, 4m 5 furlongs. Easier station (service from London, Waterloo) adjacent course. ADMISSION: Club 116, Junior Club 17 (2-21yrs), 5-11. CAR PARK: £2 in members (More Lane), remainder free.

PARADE: 4-1 Park: 1-1. **POST:** 12.15pm

SIS: **1.55** Mister Main Man, 7-2 Archies Oats, 8-2 Bigwheel Bill, 3-1 Sublime Fellow

GOING: Good. Right-hand course: seven testing fences along back straight: run-in of 30yd.

Course is 3,007, 4m 5 furlongs. Easier station (service from London, Waterloo) adjacent course. ADMISSION: Club 116, Junior Club 17 (2-21yrs), 5-11. CAR PARK: £2 in members (More Lane), remainder free.

PARADE: 4-1 Park: 1-1. **POST:** 12.15pm

SIS: **2.25** Close Harmony, 2-2 Close Harmony, 8-2 Close Harmony, 8-1 Unlikely

GOING: Good. Right-hand course: seven testing fences along back straight: run-in of 30yd.

Course is 3,007, 4m 5 furlongs. Easier station (service from London, Waterloo) adjacent course. ADMISSION: Club 116, Junior Club 17 (2-21yrs), 5-11. CAR PARK: £2 in members (More Lane), remainder free.

PARADE: 4-1 Park: 1-1. **POST:** 12.15pm

SIS: **3.05** Bushy Park 'NATIONAL HUNT' NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS B) £4,000 added 2m 110yds Penalty Value £2,957

GOING: Good. Right-hand course: seven testing fences along back straight: run-in of 30yd.

Course is 3,007, 4m 5 furlongs. Easier station (service from London, Waterloo) adjacent course. ADMISSION: Club 116, Junior Club 17 (2-21yrs), 5-11. CAR PARK: £2 in members (More Lane), remainder free.

PARADE: 4-1 Park: 1-1. **POST:** 12.15pm

SIS: **4.40** HAMBRO COUNTRYWIDE HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS C) £4,000 added 2m 110yds Penalty Value £6,873

GOING: Good. Right-hand course: seven testing fences along back straight: run-in of 30yd.

Course is 3,007, 4m 5 furlongs. Easier station (service from London, Waterloo) adjacent course. ADMISSION: Club 116, Junior Club 17 (2-21yrs), 5-11. CAR PARK: £2 in members (More Lane), remainder free.

PARADE: 4-1 Park: 1-1. **POST:** 12.15pm

SIS: **5.15** BARCLAYS BANK HANDICAP HURDLE (AMATEURS) (CLASS C) £6,000 added 2m 110yds Penalty Value £4,065

GOING: Good. Right-hand course: seven testing fences along back straight: run-in of 30yd.

Course is 3,007, 4m 5 furlongs. Easier station (service from London, Waterloo) adjacent course. ADMISSION: Club 116, Junior Club 17 (2-21yrs), 5-11. CAR PARK: £2 in members (More Lane), remainder free.

PARADE: 4-1 Park: 1-1. **POST:** 12.15pm

SIS: **6.30** BURNT OAK & SPECIAL CARGO NOVICE CHASE (CLASS C) £6,000 added 2m 110yds Penalty Value £2,957

GOING: Good. Right-hand course: seven testing fences along back straight: run-in of 30yd.

Course is 3,007, 4m 5 furlongs. Easier station (service from London, Waterloo) adjacent course. ADMISSION: Club 116, Junior Club 17 (2-21yrs), 5-11. CAR PARK: £2 in members (More Lane), remainder free.

PARADE: 4-1 Park: 1-1. **POST:** 12.15pm

SIS: **7.45** HYDE PARK CHASE (CLASS C) £6,000 added 2m 110yds Penalty Value £2,957

GOING: Good. Right-hand course: seven testing fences along back straight: run-in of 30yd.

Course is 3,007, 4m 5 furlongs. Easier station (service from London, Waterloo) adjacent course. ADMISSION: Club 116, Junior Club 17 (2-21yrs), 5-11. CAR PARK: £2 in members (More Lane), remainder free.

PARADE: 4-1 Park: 1-1. **POST:** 12.15pm

SIS: **8.00** BURNT OAK & SPECIAL CARGO NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS C) £6,000 added 2m 110yds Penalty Value £2,957

GOING: Good. Right-hand course: seven testing fences along back straight: run-in of 30yd.

Course is 3,007, 4m 5 furlongs. Easier station (service from London, Waterloo) adjacent course. ADMISSION: Club 116, Junior Club 17 (2-21yrs), 5-11. CAR PARK: £2 in members (More Lane), remainder free.

PARADE: 4-1 Park: 1-1. **POST:** 12.15pm

SIS: **8.45** HYDE PARK CHASE (CLASS C) £6,000 added 2m 110yds Penalty Value £2,957

GOING: Good. Right-hand course: seven testing fences along back straight: run-in of 30yd.

Course is 3,007, 4m 5 furlongs. Easier station (service from London, Waterloo) adjacent course. ADMISSION: Club 116, Junior Club 17 (2-21yrs), 5-11. CAR PARK: £2 in members (More Lane), remainder free.

PARADE: 4-1 Park: 1-1. **POST:** 12.15pm

SIS: **9.00** BURNT OAK & SPECIAL CARGO NOVICE HURDLE (

Schumacher's talent can level the playing field

It is a good thing Michael Schumacher learnt to cope with responsibility at an early age. This year he could be asked to shoulder not only the burden of fatherhood but also to turn the Formula One championship into something other than a Williams-Renault cavalcade.

The propaganda machinery has whirred away all winter, generating the optimism that tomorrow in Australia we embark on one of the most open and competitive seasons for many a year. We are promised winning potential from half a dozen teams, perhaps more if the return of tyre wear gives the Bridgestone runners a freakish advantage in certain conditions.

Somehow, though, this all sounds familiar. Did we not hear much the same sort of sales patter last year? Only to watch Williams obliterate the rest. Twelve months on, Benetton-Renault are claiming they are

fully rehabilitated after the trauma of losing Schumacher. McLaren-Mercedes declare themselves confident they are sustaining their forward momentum, and the Ligier-Mugen-Honda team, now under the command of Alain Prost, are suggesting they are ready to join the major league.

The one leading team not to shout the odds are Ferrari. They have wintered inauspiciously and their earlier predictions of a title challenge for 1997 have been amended to something that amounts to "forget everything we said before".

Schumacher, in particular, is playing down his and the team's expectations, insisting all they can aspire to is competing for points rather than podium places. "I am just being realistic," he reiterates.

And yet you cannot help but feel that the 28-year-old German remains the most serious

threat to the Williams pair, Jacques Villeneuve and Heinz-Harald Frentzen, even in a Ferrari that, apparently, should be outclassed once there are points at stake.

Not that Benetton and McLaren are necessarily overestimating their development, or that their drivers, Gerhard Berger and Jean Alesi, for the former, Mika Hakkinen and David Coulthard for the latter, are inadequate. It is simply that no one compares with Schumacher.

In almost any other sport, a protagonist and superior to Schumacher would devout every record in the book, but motor racing is unlike almost any other sport in that it is not entirely a sport. It is, also, an engineering test bed, a commercial

enterprise and a political minefield.

Schumacher has effectively been handicapped at Ferrari, and, at a million pounds a race, he is handsomely recompensed. But it is grossly unsatisfactory when one so gifted cannot give full expression to his talents. Imagine Muhammad Ali fighting with one hand tied by his side, or Pele playing football in flip-flops.

If the Ferrari can be made nearly as good as the Williams, that might be sufficient. Schumacher, champion in 1994 and 1995, is capable of levelling the playing field and perhaps tilting the contest his way. One who subscribes to this theory is Martin Brundle, taking a seat in the ITV commentary box after

losing the one he had at Jordan-Peugeot.

Brundle said: "I've nailed my colours to Schumacher's mast and, although Ferrari have not looked so clever in testing, I'm sticking with him. You have to wonder whether the birth of his daughter recently will compromise his commitment to some degree. If it does not, then Villeneuve and Frentzen have the Prancing Horse bearing down on them."

Ferrari having hired Ross Brawn, at the end of last year, have recently parted company with John Barnard and added another Benetton old boy, Tony Byrne, to their revamped technical organisation. Brundle said: "I don't think it will take Ross and Tony too long to get things sorted and, if they get the Ferrari close to the Williams, Schu-

macher has the ability to make the difference."

Another factor that might have a bearing on Schumacher's prospects is fatherhood. You have to wonder whether the birth of his daughter recently will compromise his commitment to some degree. If it does not, then Villeneuve and Frentzen have the Prancing Horse bearing down on them."

Flavio Briatore, still principally boss of Benetton despite other sporting or business ventures, maintains that his drivers, Gerhard Berger and Jean Alesi, are primed to be genuine contenders. He argues Berger has never been better prepared and that the arrival of Alesi's baby this winter has stabilised the mercurial Frenchman. Even

if the championship is still out of bounds for McLaren, their new-look silver car should be good enough to convey Coulthard to the head of the British rankings. Beating Hakkinen may prove more problematical and this duel is likely to be a feisty affair.

Jordan's position as the fifth best team appears under threat from Frost, who has already secured a Peugeot deal for next year. Olivier Panis made the most of bizarre circumstances to win at Monaco last season, and if Bridgestone tyres are as good in the wet as we hear, he could upset the establishment again.

Damon Hill is banking on the Bridgestone "joker" to help his cause at TWR Arrows-Yamaha. The car-engine combination is certainly not terrifying their opponents Stewart-Ford, Minardi-Hart and Lola-Ford are the other Bridgestone teams. The

rest continue with Goodyear. Tyrrell look to the reliability of Ford to revive their fortunes and the Sauber will be powered by Ferrari engines under the Petronas badge.

Villeneuve goes into the opening grand prix in Melbourne, as favourite for the championship and he will endeavour to build a decisive early-season lead over

Frentzen, who is expected to challenge more forcefully as the campaign unfolds. Close encounters at Williams would assist Schumacher, who has a crucial No 2 in Eddie Irvine and has no need to look over his shoulder.

Over the next seven months the championship tour will take in 17 venues on five continents, but the chances are we will see the 1997 champion standing at the top of the podium on Sunday. The last time the winner of the first race did not go on to lift the title was in 1989.

Hill driven back to the real world

Britain's world champion has been reduced to the ranks this season.

Derick Allsop talked to him

He lines up for a new season in Australia tomorrow with the No 1 on his car and professes himself content. There it is. all the vindication he requires. He is world champion and no one can take the achievement from him or erase it from grand prix racing's roll of honour.

And yet the emotions are apparently churning inside him, much as they always have done. He has no chance of retaining his title, which pains him, and you sense he is aware others are still waiting to see what he is really made of. Even now, Damon Hill must prove himself.

Hill and his supporters may not wish to see it that way, but then many of those who jumped on the Englishman's bandwagon last year would not know the difference between a Williams and a Warthog. They are about to see the difference between a Williams and an Arrows, and within the Formula One community this is regarded as the true test of Hill's ability and application.

Some who complimented him on his "deserved" championship success last season did so through gritted teeth. The Ulsterman Eddie Irvine was honest enough to express what many more felt: that "we will know how good he is when he's in a bad car."

Hill, by his own admission, has spent his motor racing career endeavouring to convince a sceptical world of his talent.

"I felt for a long time I was trying to prove myself at Williams," he said. "First as a test driver, then as a race driver, then telling Frank Williams I could lead the team after Ayrton Senna died. Then they put Nigel Mansell in the other car, just in case, and I beat him. There was always this sideways look."

Hill said: "Anything is possible, yes, especially if it rains because our Bridgestone tyres work really well in the wet. But when I talk about winning a race, I'm only talking about winning it on merit – going out there, qualifying high in the grid, outracing everyone and crossing the line first. Lucking into a win is not going to change one's perception of how competitive the team is."

Gaining fortunate wins is not something Hill is accustomed to, and herein lies the frustration he can no longer suppress. The imminent reality of his predicament has finally loosened a tongue held in check, since Williams showed him the door.

"Yes, there will be frustrations," he said. "My record as a ratio of wins to starts and qualifying ratio [pole positions achieved] I think is second to Fazio. And it will be very frustrating to be powerless to stop someone taking the title. I felt I deserved the opportunity to defend it and I think I could have been going for a second

championship if I was in the Williams."

Hill believes also he might have beaten Michael Schumacher to the championship in 1995 had Williams given him their undivided support instead of stubbornly and obstinately sticking to the policy of not getting behind one particular driver.

What you saw the end of '95 was a guy who was thoroughly disillusioned and thoroughly disappointed and confused by the actions and policies of the team. I put myself in for the team, not just for myself. I'm pretty loyal and I expected more support.

I think a lot of credit for the success last year has to be attributed to the work I put in and Adrian Newey [the team's estranged chief designer] put in to make us a more effective fighting unit at the racetrack, tactically and operationally, than in all the time I'd been with the team."

Hill's dismay over the stewardship and decisions of his for-

mer bosses, Frank Williams and Patrick Head, has been compounded by the latter's recent suggestion that an unproductive season would drive the 36-year-old into retirement.

"I don't take Patrick's comments too seriously," Hill scoffed. "I think he has been baffled by me for a long time and I still don't think he really understands where I'm coming from. I certainly hope to be around next year because I've still got some winning left in me and I want to explore the possibilities of winning another championship."

Those possibilities, he recognises, may have to present themselves elsewhere and Hill has only a one-year contract with Arrows. But he is similarly resentful of any suspicion that life in the slow lane will diminish his enthusiasm and commitment to the team's cause.

He said: "I'm going to invest a lot of myself in this season, and I've got a role to play here. There's no way I could do this

without doing it wholeheartedly. I'm a conscientious person, I'm a hard worker."

"We have a steep hill to climb but we've got to go up. There's so much potential here. At least we know we can make more progress than any other team in Formula One."

"Tom won't want to have egg on his face this year and neither will I, but it is going to be very difficult, to start with, just to finish in the points, and that's the truth of the matter. I'm hoping my experience will give me an edge over some others who may have a more competitive package."

Hill is aware he will have to demonstrate that capacity to earn a return to the forefront of Formula One next year, which amounts to the perennial, dreaded challenge he thought he had left behind: the need to prove himself.

In the meantime, he will watch from afar as others compete for his crown, and he admits, he would take some

delight in seeing Gerhard Berger, of Benetton-Renault, beat the Williams drivers and his old nemesis, Schumacher.

"I really want Berger to win and I think he could," Hill said. "They've improved the car, he's got the experience and what's he's got now which perhaps he never had before, is the realisation that winning the championship will give him a warm feeling into his old age. I think it niggles with him he hasn't won it yet and he knows he's running out of chances. Once the seed is in your mind I know how it can grow."

"I've had that niggling thing taken from my mind, but although I'm not in a top-line drive at the moment I don't want to languish. I actually feel motivated by the situation."

"I'm excited by last season, but more interested in the prospect of the new season. I want to enjoy it. I don't want to do it if it's heartache and painful. But I've taken disappointment before and I know I can handle it."

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Bath back their local 'academy'

Bath, the English champions whose reputation as ultimate professionals failed to survive the onset of professionalism itself, were yesterday back in the realm of irony once again. Twenty-four hours after cold-shouldering their hugely expensive Argentinian imports, Federico Mendez and German Llames, for today's Courage league match with London Irish, they unveiled a scheme designed to tap a stream of home-grown talent.

Following hard on the heels of their First Division rivals Saracens and Harlequins, both of whom have struck up partnerships with local schools in recent months, Bath strengthened its links with Colston's Collegiate School in Bristol, probably the most accomplished rugby academy in the country. The club has pledged to cough up 50 per cent of the fees for gifted youngsters in return for first call on their loyalty at school leaving age.

The sharpest irony of all is that the three greatest players ever to lace up their boots at the Recreation Ground - Jeremy Guscott, John Hall and Stuart Barnes - were all educated at state schools. Tony Swift, the Bath chief executive, said the club would act quickly to allay the fears of other rugby-playing schools that Colston's link would undermine their own efforts. "We'll be talking to head teachers and assuring them that

Chris Hewett looks at rugby's present tensions and has a glimpse of the future

we will do everything we can to support them," he confirmed.

With Mendez relegated to the bench and Llames struggling for match fitness, Bath go in against the Exiles with Graham Dated at hooker and the old firm of Martin Haag and Nigel Redman at lock. Richard Webster and the player-coach, Andy Robinson, in the back row should give them a hard enough edge to dispense with their relegation-haunted visitors, who give Niall Hogan, once Ireland's captain, a debut at scrum-half.

Quins travel to Orrell without the services of the rested Will Carling, whose midfield place goes to Jason Keyte. West Hartlepool may make a lengthy trip to title-chasing Leicester and are bolstered by the return of Kevin Moseley to their pack.

However, the most significant action of the weekend is likely to occur tomorrow. Wasps, the leaders, take on Gloucester at Lotus Road and even though the Londoners hope to field their new capture, Scotland's Kenny Logan, on the wing, they will be wary of the West Country threat at scrum and line-out. David Sims and company blew

the Wasps tight five away at Kinghorn earlier in the season and as they fancy their own chances of qualifying for next season's Heineken Cup, there could be fireworks once again.

Despite smarting from their comprehensive defeat at Leicester on Tuesday night, Sale are hot favourites to enhance their own European aspirations with a second victory over Northampton in the space of a fortnight. Saracens, though, will not be quite so confident of seeing off Bristol, who are clinging to a slim hope of avoiding the end of season play-offs.

While the leading English clubs have protected their own interests by securing a 12-team First Division for next season, their counterparts in Wales are in the throes of turmoil following the WRU's decision to forge ahead with an eight-team premiership. The move means four clubs - in all probability Treorchy, Dumbat, Caerphilly and Newbridge - will be relegated in May and no promotion for the Second Division pace-setters, Llandowery and Cross Keys.

Treorchy have already threatened the Welsh union with legal action but the traditional big guns of the Welsh game are in favour of the streamlining, which will bring them an increased share of broadcasting money. The move will be debated at a Special General Meeting on 6 April.

RFU looks to grass roots for support

CHRIS HEWETT

Just when you thought it was safe to go back to your favourite rugby ground in the expectation of watching an 80-minute game rather than an 80-hour committee debate, politics are back on the agenda with a vengeance.

Tomorrow, the Rugby Football Union holds a special general meeting at the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham and as the venue is already playing host to the Crufts dog show, there is a distinct possibility that the entire sport will be certified as barking mad by the end of the afternoon.

The RFU, acutely aware of its own shortcomings during the transition to professionalism, will attempt to win widespread grass roots support for changes to its own management structure, which include the abolition of the posts of secretary and treasurer and the appointment of a chief executive. All fairly dry and straightforward? Not on your life.

As so often in the last year of communal backbiting, battle lines have been drawn around personalities rather than issues. The leading antagonists tomorrow will, once again, include Cliff Brittle, current executive chairman of the RFU and a constant thorn in the flesh of his own organisation, and Tony Hallatt, the existing secretary who, if the governing

body gets its way, would be the leading candidate to fill the new chief executive's role.

Hallatt's opponents will insist that the chief executive post be advertised nationally and that the selection panel include the chairman of the newly constituted management board - who, if the rebels win the day, will be none other than Cliff Brittle. By the same yardstick, Brittle's chances of landing that chairmanship depend largely on the election procedure agreed tomorrow; the RFU wants the voting to be confined to its own committee members, who would almost certainly give their bete noir very short shrift indeed.

Should the rebel contingent, led by a handful of clouts from the North-west including Manchester, Wigan and Orrell, win their campaign to extend voting rights to the entire membership, Brittle could well remain at the centre of the decision-making process. Indeed, if all rebel amendments are carried, the new chairman would wield extraordinary individual power.

As a result, the RFU have mobilised some big guns in support. These include Lord MacLaurin, chairman of both the Sports Council and the English Cricket Board, and Will Carling, the former England captain. They also include Ian McGeechan, this year's Lions coach, who said yesterday: "I applaud Tony Hallatt and the

RFU Committee for their courage in this time of change. They should be supported."

Now that is an interesting one. McGeechan's stance is very different to the one taken by Fran Cotton, the Lions manager, who said earlier this week that the RFU had "shot themselves in the foot politically" and backed the move to advertise the chief executive's post. And Butte? "Cliff Brittle is far more of a moderniser than people give him credit for; he believes in professionalism and doesn't want to hold it back, but he wants to see a properly funded grass roots game as well." Not much common ground there.

The Lions will have enough problems in South Africa this summer without political disagreements. But tomorrow's meeting runs far deeper than that: a heavy defeat for the RFU will open up old wounds and inevitably lead to a re-hardening of attitudes among the senior clubs. English rugby's fragile peace is paper thin and ructions in Birmingham could easily condemn us all to another year of bickering and create a whole new agenda: one with "Breakaway" stamped all over it.

Sky Television has won the rights to the European Cup for the next five years. Including England internationals at Twickenham and the next three Lions tours, Sky will now broadcast around 80 games a season.

It's just like another game for both of us," he said. "It's

a close to full-strength squad, with Bernard Dwyer and the Oldham-based Matt Calland added to the side who beat London two weeks ago. Oldham have one Australian - Brett Goldspink - fit after a hand injury, but another, Matt Munro, will be out for several weeks with a broken bone in his hand.

The Cup holders, St Helens, away to Keighley, still hope Derek McVey will be fit after a similar injury and Steve Prescott is back after food poisoning.

Leds will give a debut to their

New Zealand test centre, Rich Blackmore, at Featherstone, although their hooker, Wayne Collins, is ruled out with a groin strain. Featherstone will be with-

out Steve Molloy, but there will still be a strong Leeds flavour through their coach, David Ward, and a number of players who have passed through the revolving doors at Headingley.

Sheffield Eagles have agreed terms to sign Steve McCurrie, Widnes' former Great Britain hooker who has been playing rugby union for Bedford.

Halifax have denied that they are about to release six players following the resignation of their coach, Steve Simms, last week. A spokesman said the club would never contemplate sacking players while they are waiting to appoint a successor.

The deadline for applications has been extended to Monday.

Pigott welcomed the resignation

as "a step in the right direction", though Sussex have appointed their long-serving committee member, Ken Hopkins, as chairman in succession to Caffyn, whose seven-year reign came to an end after he pinned much of the blame for an exodus of players from Hove on the exing of Alan Wells, the former captain.

Pigott, who served Sussex

for 18 years, has forced a special general meeting on 8 April, when there will be a vote of no confidence in the committee.

He said: "I can confirm I would like to become chairman. The future of Sussex is at stake and new blood and new ideas are urgently needed. I would like to come in and restructure the club, with everything based on doing what is best for Sussex."

■ Brendon Julian, the Australian Test all-rounder, will be

Surrey's overseas player this summer for the second season running. He missed much of last year through injury.

While Kuruvilla, a tall sinewy

bowler of just above medium pace impressed again on debut with his length, line and variation of pace, it was the experi-



Dream team: David and Marie Dutton met through their love of pinball and own around 50 machines

Photograph: David Ashdown

The pinball wizards set for tilt at title



KEITH ELLIOTT

at large

known reason, and American players in particular develop styles as flamboyant as Michael Johnson's running. But you need other abilities besides as fast eye, quick brain and a nifty hip-wiggle.

"You don't have to use the full force of the flipper," Dutton says. "You can do a lot of tricks with that simple plastic bar." Like backspin, sidespin and in multi-ball games, holding two balls on one flipper while keeping the third ball in action. You need to see it to believe it."

No wonder Dutton was banned from playing the machine at his local pub. "The landlord said I was too good. He told me: 'You are putting in just one coin and winning loads of replays.' He wanted to encourage people to keep playing and putting in money."

Ah, there's the chartered

accountant in him. He likes the concept that playing a machine in an arcade or cafe is "winning the right to stop putting money in". But it's not always like that. Marie says: "We sometimes go into an arcade and he will feed money into a machine, trying to win and set a new high score. When he has done that, he will walk away, leaving replays up there."

Dutton is also one of the few Europeans to win a title in the United States, spiritual home of the game. "We took a year out to travel round the world and we were in Arizona when we heard about the Wild West Pinball Show. I always seem to play better when I come fresh to a machine, and I was lucky enough to win," he says modestly. The prize was a machine called Bride of Pinbot, reckoned by many to be the best of all pinball games. But it cost the Duttons so much to ship their prize back from Phoenix that it would probably have been cheaper to buy the machine.

Still, Dutton should be good. As well as playing his heart out to win his dream girl, he's been playing machines since he was five. "I lived in Liverpool and there were a couple of dozen cafes within two miles. Our neighbour rented out machines to these cafes, and I was his official tester."

He bought his first machine

while at university in Sheffield. When it broke down, he learnt to repair it. "The old electro-mechanical ones are not that complicated: that's the secret. You can make them work with a rusty nail." Gradually, he has collected more and more.

"There were times when I have thought, 'I can't get another one,' but Marie has encouraged me and said: 'Go for it.' I suppose I am a little bit of an eccentric. It is a release for a side of my character that I don't use in other ways."

Dutton, now 37, admits that competition brings out the best in him. "When I play board games against the children, I find myself mentally smacking my wrists because I'm trying to beat them." He will certainly be the man to beat in Birmingham today, when he defends his British pinball crown. He has won the title three times, more than anyone else since the Pinball Owners Association started 20 years ago.

However, his wife, who has been runner-up in the championships, is quite capable of beating him. "She's a very good player," he concedes. She lives a Gallic snort. "He's not invincible." Maybe not. But I'm not playing against him, and he's not coming to mend my machine either.

The Wizard 97 Pinball Convention takes place at the National Indoor Arena, Birmingham, today and tomorrow from 11am-5pm. It features the largest number of pinball machines seen in the UK. The British Championship is an open event with qualifying rounds today and finals tomorrow. Entry is £5, including one child free.

Hulme the elder eyes equality

Rugby League

DAVE HADFIELD

The Hulme brothers play against each other for only the second time in their careers today, with elder brother David hoping to level the scores.

After years of marauding in harness for Widnes, the pair first collided last season when Paul's Warrington beat Latics, then home to David. The senior Hulme will quietly fancy his chances of an equaliser today, when his new club, Salford, go to Wilderspool in their Silk Cut Challenge Cup quarter-final.

"It's just like another game

for our mum and dad, because they know that one of us is going to be unhappy on Saturday evening. I just hope it's Paul."

If Salford's victory in a pre-season friendly between the two clubs is any guide, it could well be the younger Hulme counting the cost. More relevant is that the two Warrington players injured that day, Mark Hilton and Matt Mead, are both still out. Along with the return of Steve Blakeley at stand-off, that could just give Salford the edge.

Oldham have a difficult assignment tomorrow, at home to last year's beaten finalists, the Bradford Bulls. Bradford have

a close to full-strength squad, with Bernard Dwyer and the Oldham-based Matt Calland added to the side who beat London two weeks ago. Oldham have one Australian - Brett Goldspink - fit after a hand injury, but another, Matt Munro, will be out for several weeks with a broken bone in his hand.

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Pigott's plans for the future of Sussex

Cricket

Tony Pigott, the former Sussex and England pace bowler, yesterday pledged to maintain his campaign to oust the entire Sussex committee after the county had been thrown into further turmoil with the resignation of the chairman, Alan Caffyn.

Pigott welcomed the resignation as "a step in the right direction", though Sussex have appointed their long-serving committee member, Ken Hopkins, as chairman in succession to Caffyn, whose seven-year reign came to an end after he pinned much of the blame for an exodus of players from Hove on the exing of Alan Wells, the former captain.

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West Indies lose some momentum

TONY COZIER,

reports from Kingston, Jamaica

Carl Hooper duly completed his seventh Test hundred but the anticipated avalanche of runs from the West Indies did not materialise on the second day of the first Test here yesterday.

Hooper, 57 at the start when the West Indies were 300 for 4, advanced to 129 before stinging a catch to mid-off from India's best bowler Abey Kuruvilla less than 10 minutes before lunch.

He was one of three wickets gained by the persevering Indians in the last 35 minutes prior to the interval when the West Indies were 370 for 7 in the first session.

Kumble immediately accounted for Junior Murray, leg-broke him and the captain, Stephen Fleming, with 51, made Sri Lanka regret their decision to field first. The tourists were clearly short of match play and it showed that their bowlers struggled to maintain a consistent line.

Young reached three figures after tea when he drove a short delivery from the off-spinner Muttiah Muralitharan to the cover boundary. He and Horne put on 140 runs in 146 minutes to establish a second-wicket record against Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka were 105

overs out when Brian Lara, the overnight partner when it was worth 67, fighting a leg-break he induced a heave from Bishop and Sunil Joshi trotted around from mid-off to gather in the catch. Bishop had made 24 and was followed 20 minutes later by Hooper's dismissal.

In 104 min, Hooper stroked 17 boundaries in his customary languid fashion but the manner of his exit was an indication that he had not rid himself of the habit of surrendering his wicket easily when well set.

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Roy Keane and Danny Baker have taken over from Eric Cantona and Chris Evans as enfants terribles of their particular professions

If Wednesday night turned the form book on its head, it certainly sent a few reputations tumbling too. Porto, billed as Europe's second best team (by Alex Ferguson no less) were apparently coming to Old Trafford to show Manchester United how it was done. United's only hope, we were told, was that Roy Keane would come steaming out of the tunnel breathing fire over the Portuguese men of war. Meanwhile, Danny Baker's controversial show on Radio Five Live later that evening was to provide a habitually thoughtful provoking end to the night's action.

Indeed, Porto came, had a look and obviously didn't fancy it. Mean while, Keane and Baker sat on the sidelines, the former kicking his injured heels, the latter licking his wounds inflicted earlier in the day by the red card administered by his BBC employers (who claimed he'd "over-

stepped the mark once too often" with his comments about that referee and that incident). It was left to Ryan Giggs to cement his hitherto flimsy reputation with an immense performance. Bearing in mind that England are on course for an extra UEFA Cup place next season thanks to our current fair play standing in European competition, perhaps it was a good thing Keane sat this one out.

Ironically, Keane and Baker have taken over from Eric Cantona and Chris Evans as *enfants terribles* of their particular professions. Both are finely talented yet capricious, prone to going in feet first without thinking. But while Baker licks his own wounds, Keane's misdemeanours often come at considerable cost to his own side. And while curbing Baker's caustic tongue would be akin to asking Graham Kelly to be upbeat, curb Keane's over-exuberance and

you get, I believe, a truly great player rather than just a very good one. He thinks differently, claiming last week that his occasional rashes of blood to the head are "all part of my game because I'm an Irishman" – which is like excusing every Scot from buying a round. Ian Wright is another regular miscreant who argues that if you take away his passion, the heart of his game is gone; like Sampson without the hair presumably.

But petulance, not passion, is surely the issue here. Wright and Keane are not hard men; they're simply aggressive players whose aggression undermines their ability. As the former Nottingham Forest defender Larry Lloyd once said: "Aggression is fine, provided it's channelled in the right direction. Keane thinks he's a hard man but he isn't in the same class as some of the real hard men. Ferguson's

game but just get on with it". Indeed, Hughes has admitted that "the first lesson I learned at the top was to keep my mouth shut. Because the people doing all the talking are really the losers."

Ferguson defends Keane as "the most victimised player in the game" and there's no doubt that such players can be victims of their own reputations. At McDermott Park on New Year's Day, St Johnstone mid-fielder Chas Charlton (now at Hibs) was introduced to me as "that player who always gets sent off". Charlton duly obliged, and his crimes were no worse than those being committed by his colleagues.

Yet they are invariably villains too, even if they are. Wright apart, conspicuous by their absence from the top 10 lists of players carrying the most disciplinary points this season to date (a list headed by such "bruisers"

as Carlton Palmer, Billy McKinlay, Noel Whelan and Emile Heskey). While that might appear strange, given football's current card-happy climate, it does support the theory that referees are far more likely to give the usual suspects the benefit of the doubt than victimise them. The problem is that when they do overstep the mark they do so in style.

Proof that football's Sampsons can play without their hair comes in the large bulk of Julian Dicks, a player who used to wear a T-shirt with the words "Hello. My name is Satan"; who keeps pot-bellied pigs and bulldogs in front room; and who once admitted "I knew I was gonna hit him but I couldn't help myself".

Dicks was last sent off in September 1995. In the meantime he's curbed his misplaced aggression and matured into a left-back who can cross the ball as well as Andy

Hinchliffe, attack as well as Graeme Le Saux – with as much passion as Stuart Pearce. The cynics will say that Dicks is simply more adept at getting away with it, a view which any avid Dicks watcher will refute.

It's as if the player known as "Terminator" simply said to himself "I'll be back, and I'll still be hard, but I'll be fair too." Just as Dave Mackay, Graeme Souness, John Greig, and Johnny Giles were. So perhaps instead of behaving like Danny Baker's favourite team, Millwall, and not caring that no one likes them, players like Keane and Wright should heed the best piece of advice meted out by Keane's former manager, Brian Clough, to Giles during his 44 days as Leeds manager: "God gave you intelligence, skill, agility and the best passing ability in the game. What God didn't give you was six studs to wrap around someone else's knee."

Unusual suspects on brink of glory Ferguson joins Rangers' absent friends

Glenn Moore
looks forward to
this weekend's
intriguing FA Cup
sixth-round ties

The most romantic FA Cup in living memory, or the poorest? It is all a question of perspective. This weekend's quarter-finals are certainly one of the most unusual in the old pot's 126-year history. With only two contenders having lifted the trophy in the last 50 years the pedigree is more mongrel than thoroughbred.

However, we could yet have a final featuring Gianfranco Zola, Gianluca Vialli, Franck Leboeuf, Mark Hughes, Emerson Juninho, and Fabrizio Ravanelli. The worldwide television audience which will be tuning in on 17 May would be thrilled by that international collection.

Or they could be puzzled by the sight of Portsmouth against either Wrexham or Chesterfield. That unlikely prospect would be the first final without a top-flight team involved. Romantic? Or anticlimactic?

The only sixth-round tie being played on schedule today has romance aplenty. Derby County's life with Middlesbrough will be the Baseball Ground's last FA Cup tie after 101 years and 137 ties, it even hosted two semi-finals at the turn of the century. The ghosts of Bloomer, Doherty, Carter will be watching as Ravancelli, Juninho, Igor Simeunovic and Aljosa Asanovic seek to become the first Italian, Brazilian and Croats respectively to play in the final.

The match will also be Martin Taylor's first for Derby since breaking his left leg against Southend in October 1994. He replaces Russell Hufton who has been dropped after conceding 16 goals in five games, six against Middlesbrough in midweek.

Taylor, 30, has played half-a-dozen matches on loan to Crew this season but was so depressed after them he engaged a sports psychologist to lift his confidence. He has since been playing well in the reserves but Jim Smith was still asked if his decision was "a gamble".

"Not big a gamble as playing Russell," the County manager said. "On Wednesday night his positional sense for the first two goals made him look as if he had never played in goal before.



Carried away by the Cup: Vinnie Jones (second from right) leads his Wimbledon team-mates through training yesterday

Photograph: Peter Jay

McGhee keeps faith with his pack of Wolves

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE

Mark McGhee is confident Wolves will hold their nerve when the First Division promotion battle heats up.

Wolves have won a League double over Tranmere at Molineux

today with McGhee happy he has enough experience in his squad to avoid jitters at Easter and thereafter.

McGhee thinks Wolves, who have 62 points and are 10 points adrift of leaders Bolton, need a further 20 from their remaining 11 games – including

quicker than usual, in the league game at Selhurst. Efan Ekoku dispossessed him and scored after two minutes.

Hillsborough will host the BBC's live match tomorrow, those with access to Sky can warm up with Portsmouth-Chelsea while Welsh viewers can follow Wrexham's trip to Chesterfield. The winners will be the first team from the third level (now Second Division) to reach the last four since Plymouth in 1984.

Wrexham could even become the second team, after

Cardiff in 1927, to take the FA Cup out of England. If they did so, they would not be allowed to represent England in the European Cup-Winners' Cup, the runners-up would qualify instead.

Portsmouth may be a better bet to be the first winners from outside the elite since Sunderland in 1973. As the First Division's form team they will not fear Chelsea, especially as Zola is beginning to suffer from the pace and frequency of English games.

Terry Venables at Wembley?

Meanwhile, in the Premiership, Manchester United could go seven points clear and Middlesbrough be cast eight points from safety.

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Tottenham in midweek the last thing Peter Reid needed was United's midweek demolition of Porto. Sunderland pushed United close in the FA Cup last year but lost 5-0 at Old Trafford (now Second Division) to reach the last four since Plymouth in 1984.

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Tilt at the title
Keith Elliott talks to two
pinball perfectionists, page 29

Sport

SATURDAY 8 MARCH 1997 • THE INDEPENDENT

Up for the Cup
Phil Shaw meets the men
behind Wrexham, page 30

Kipketer destroys 800 metres record

Athletics

MIKE ROWBOTTOM
reports from Paris

Wilson Kipketer generated delight and disbelief in equal measure at the world indoor championships here yesterday by taking nearly a second off the world 800 metres record in his first round of racing, stopping the clock at 1min 44.84sec.

The Kenyan-born runner, racing for his adopted country of Denmark, had only decided to enter these championships last month, and when he took to the track for yesterday's heat he had no plan to make an immediate attack on Paul Ereng's eight-

year-old mark of 1min 44.84sec. That all changed as he glanced up at the huge screen after his first 200 metres lap of the Palais-Omnisports track and noticed his split time of 25 seconds.

"When I saw that, and nobody was following me, I thought, 'OK, I have to go for it,'" said Kipketer, who thus became the first athlete to claim the \$50,000 (£31,000) bonus on offer for world records at this championships.

Should he run faster in today's semi-final or Sunday's final, he would not receive further bonus awards. But, unless anyone else runs faster this weekend, he has already assured himself of a first instal-

ment which looks certain to be matched by a further \$50,000 for winning the event.

"It is good to eliminate problems," he said with a broad grin. "Now I have only one thing to think about, that is winning the gold medal. I do not need to run a world record again. One problem at a time..."

"It was the first time a world record had been beaten in the first round of an individual event at any world championships. It was not my plan to demolish the field or the record; I set out simply to run a safe race."

But his plan changed on the hoof as, beautifully easy in his movement, he took an immediate lead and drew away from

the labouring mortals behind him.

Asked if he was surprised to have taken such a large amount off the record, Ereng had set at the 1989 world indoor championships in Budapest, Kipketer replied: "I could say yes or no. I didn't know I was going to break the world record, so yes I was surprised, but I was also not surprised because I have been training in the United States for two months with my coach Mike Boit and I knew I was in very good shape."

Asked if he would have bothered to run at these championships had prize money not been made available for the first time, he replied: "Yes, I was going to race here and it doesn't matter if there is money or not. I think you could call that my perfect race because I knew nobody was pressuring me and I could control everything."

He would not be drawn on reflecting upon his bitter experience last year, when he was unable to run at the Olympics because his Danish nationality has not been fully established.

After his performance in running 1min 44.84sec, the third fastest 800m in history, last season, Kipketer looks eminently capable of proving a point at this summer's world championships – for which he is eligible – by beating the Norwegian who won the Olympic ti-

tle in his absence, Vebjorn Rødal. But he did not want to talk too much about that yesterday either.

"We cannot talk about the summer before we reach the summer," he said. "We are here, we are in the winter."

Which was a perfectly fine place to be here yesterday.

Jamie Baileigh and Ashia Hansen, both of whom came to grief in their last appearances at the European indoor championships three years ago, took confident strides towards their respective finals.

Baileigh, running with the tactical assurance that he lacked at the European indoor championships here in 1994, when he tripped and fell in the final, won

row's triple jump final at her first attempt with 14.24 metres.

That ended an unfortunate sequence in indoor championships – she failed to qualify here in 1994, did the same at the 1995 world indoors, and failed to register a mark at last year's European indoors.

Jason Livingston's hopes of winning a medal in the 60 metres ended with a first-round defeat. Livingston, the first athlete to make a British team after returning from a four-year doping ban, could only manage 6.76sec and will have to be content with his achievement in winning the British vest which he says he intends to frame.

Results, page 31

Ferrari set the target for rivals

Motor racing

DAVID TREMAYNE
reports from Melbourne

Relief mingled with caution here as the preliminary shots were finally fired in the battle for the 1997 world championship, which begins with tomorrow's Australian Grand Prix.

The relief came as some sort of perspective began to emerge during the first day of practice after the most confusing and inconclusive off-season in recent years had thrown up far more questions than answers regarding the relative performances of the leading contenders.

Caution might have been expected from the drivers after environmental protesters had deposited diesel oil on key corners of the Albert Park circuit. However, they failed to make any further impact and the drivers' reticence was evident not in the way they attacked the circuit but in their interpretation of the first day's running. Michael Schumacher finished the day in control by half a second for a Ferrari team which, according to the jungle drums, had been troubled for much of its testing programme.

"Our work went according to plan and our aim today was to find a good set-up both for qualifying and for the race," Ferrari's sporting director, Jean Todt, said. "But let's not get carried away. We know what level of fuel we were carrying, but what

about our rivals? This we will not know about for sure until qualifying."

This is a traditional uncertainty on the first day, when cars do not always run in full qualifying trim during free practice, which does not count for grid places. However, this year there is the added complication of the tyre war between the established kings of Goodyear and the new pretenders, Bridgestone.

Drivers must now evaluate the performance of different compound tyres, and to do that some teams choose to run with a heavier fuel load, which can produce a misleading result by slowing them artificially. Having made their choice of tyres for free practice, they must thereafter stick with it for qualifying and the race. Thus it was also hard to draw hard and fast conclusions, since nobody could be quite certain who was running what.

"Couple that with the fuel situation – maybe we had less than the others, maybe not – and coming first today is a meaningless prize," Schumacher admitted. However, he said with the air of a man whose machinery had surprised him. Certainly, it surprised others.

Schumacher's great rival and fellow German, Heinz-Harald Frentzen, who has replaced Damon Hill in the dominant Williams-Renault team, barely had time to savor the achievement of lapping faster than his colleague Jacques Villeneuve for the first time, when Schu-



Michael Schumacher on his way to setting the fastest time yesterday on the first day of practice for tomorrow's Australian Grand Prix in Melbourne

Photograph: Alsport

macher beat his best time by half a second.

"It's pretty nice to be that far up the order," Frentzen grinned in acknowledgement of the plaudits, but he was not about to let anything go to his head. "It's very early right now. Friday is a day just for sorting all the things like tyres out. I don't think the times matter."

Hill's under-developed TWR

Arrows Yamaha is clearly no match yet for his old team's quick new cars, but he remained philosophical. Relaxed, and outwardly resigned to the need to pay further dues before he can push himself back to the respectable end of the grid, the world champion even found time to joke when his specially tailored driving seat was delayed in customs.

"First I lose my seat at Williams," he said, "and now I lose my Arrows seat as well."

Until a gearbox failure

brought him to a premature halt in the morning Hill had momentarily set the fastest time in the early running when his Bridgestone tyres were at their best against the Goodyears of the Williams and Ferrari drivers.

He expressed himself happy with 13th fastest time overall, which was rather better than some had predicted for a car that has suffered persistent teething troubles. "In all honesty I think that if we can qualify two and a half seconds away from the front of the grid that would be a good result for us right now," he said.

Hill will not have missed another noteworthy performance, however. Ralf Schumacher lapped within a second of his brother's fastest time to take fifth place, in the elite company of Jean Alesi and Villeneuve, driving the improved Jordan-Peugeot that Hill turned down in favour of the Arrows.

Hill interview, page 28

Everton poised to clinch £5m Bilic signing

Football

ALAN NIXON

Everton were last night rushing through the £5m transfer of West Ham's Slaven Bilic in time to have the centre-half signed before the transfer deadline.

The 28-year-old Croatian in-

ternational met Goodison Park officials last night after deciding to leave Upton Park following talks earlier in the day, exploiting an escape clause in his contract in preference for a deal worth an estimated £1m a year.

Everton are keen to have Bilic's signature quickly as they will need to process a work permit

application before he can play. However, that should be arranged in the three weeks left for signings eligible to play this season.

The Newcastle manager Kenny Dalglish yesterday tried to play down reports of a training ground argument with David Ginola. The 15-minute

confrontation was witnessed by fans on Thursday.

"The players sat on the grass and we had a meeting," Dalglish said yesterday. "Ginola was one of the players that was spoken to but we're not going to disclose what's involved in discussions between myself and players."

The Football Association has played down reports that England coach Glenn Hoddle has set up a crisis meeting with Premier managers.

Hoddle was reported to have planned a summit with Alex Ferguson, Kenny Dalglish and Roy Evans in an attempt to avoid the withdrawal of many

of his players from this summer's internationals.

"Although the England manager talks with all club managers on a regular basis, there is no planned summit," an FA spokesman said.

Arsène Wenger, the Arsenal manager, said yesterday that any of his players selected would take part.

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THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3241. Saturday 8 March By Spurius

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14					15		
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24			22		23		
25							
26				27			

ACROSS

- R Crusoe, rugged hunting type (7)
- Foreign articles about British colony, quite readable (7)
- Shrub produced by park-keeper we hear (9)
- Advance proclamation made by girl in Bahama (5)
- Country code largely palming restriction on artus (5)
- Type of truck seen on a railway somewhere in Ireland (9)
- They're mainly involved in carrying receptacles (9)
- Books in and books out regularly at this establishment (7,7)
- Potters idly about the City, thought with high security classification (3, 5)
- Young branch of medical science? (11)
- Very good hooker's bowled over by tactical play (9)
- Primitive mammal must be a tailless variety - positive about that? (8)
- He's been made First Sea Lord, by Jove! (7)
- Change in Euro note - another meeting required? (7)
- American prophet going around in bowler (6)
- Contribution from gentleman didn't improve things (5)
- Socialite, teases (7)
- Exterior, rotary (7)
- Scored own goal (7)
- VNT MC U (7)
- Sofishoe eagle (7)
- Specs, Rochdale (7)
- I T ARE D (7)
- BULLSEYE PROOFVEST (11)
- EDDY PUDN (7)
- HANGID APOSTATE (7)
- IGL E G E (7)
- LEVEL BRIDLE (7)

DOWN

- Man about to join firm has to be consistent (6)
- Drug, one wrongly prescribed, making us suffer (7)
- Person responsible for opera unhappy with Trial cast? (9)
- Tory Eurosceptic for example is quite a moaning minnie (5,5)
- Local body found in field? (5)
- Part of building specified by clerk, we're told? (5)
- New form of Belgian language? (7)
- Lamb, for instance - one's often dipped in pen (8)
- Young branch of medical science? (11)
- Very good hooker's bowled over by tactical play (9)
- Primitive mammal must be a tailless variety - positive about that? (8)
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- HANGID APOSTATE (7)
- IGL E G E (7)
- LEVEL BRIDLE (7)

Friday's solution

Last Saturday's solution

EASY RECOGNITION
SEA A MUNICIPAL
CARDS INDIVIDUALS
AV HME OOG W
PTENDS RUEPH
A D D L O B
DESPITE TINNIE
E H N E S I S
KEATON FISHNET
I H O L D R
SKYE SCORINGLINE
S H D P B D
INDIANAPOLIS
LORIV HOD
LIMSKIN AMID

SOCIAL TEASES
MD U R N H K
EXTERIOR ROTARY
ST R M C U K
SCORED OWN GOAL
VNT MC U
SOFISHOE EAGLE
SPECs ROCHEADE
I T ARE D
BULLSEYE PROOFVEST
EDDY PUDN
HANGID APOSTATE
IGL E G E
LEVEL BRIDLE

The first five correct solutions to this week's puzzle opened next Thursday receive hardback copies of the Oxford Dictionary of Quotations. Answers and winners' names will be published next Saturday. Send solutions to Saturday Crossword, P.O. Box 4018, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5BL. Please use the box number and postcode and give your own postcode. Last week's winners: Gordon Wilson, Edinburgh; Kevin McNeil, Southampton; M Magee, Little Fransham; Rosemary Harrison, London E17; Peter & Kim Burns, Gants Hill.

In Monday's 20-page sports section
I felt that it was totally wrong that Matthew Le Tissier took the brunt for the [England] performance. Matt's been there before and is big enough and strong enough to take it but, as far as I'm concerned, we should all have taken some stick! Alan Shearer talks to Ian Stanford in the Monday interview

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مكتبة من الأصل



IMAGE OF THE WEEK

As our gardening expert Anna Pavord puts it: 'I wouldn't go as far as to say spring has arrived ... but it sure as hell feels as if it isn't winter any more.' Certainly these crocuses on a hillside near Tredegar, Wales, testify to that spring feeling. Photograph by Andrew Buurman, using a Canon EOS 10, 35mm lens, 4,000th second at f5.6. To order a print of this picture phone 0171-293 2534



the long weekend

THE INDEPENDENT • SATURDAY 8 MARCH 1997

WORDS OF THE WEEK

THE TRIBUNE



We are part of a world system, the working of which is no longer compatible with either democracy or peace. If we want them, we must change the world system. We must change it swiftly, for if we wait, the initiative will be in the hands of those to whom neither democracy nor peace is an ideal charged with meaning.

The world system that is destroying hope in the world is capitalism. That it means the destruction of democracy, Italy and Germany are there to show. That it means war, Manchuria and Abyssinia and Spain are there to bear their tragic witness.

It is capitalism that has caused world depression. It is capitalism that has created the distressed areas. It is capitalism that is piling up vast armaments now for the war whose shadow beset us all. It is capitalism that divides our people into the two nations of rich and poor. Either we must defeat capitalism, or we shall be defeated by it.

The defeat of capitalism depends upon the unity of the working class. If its forces are divided, as in Italy and Germany, it is defeated in detail. A united working class can take the offensive. It has the massed power out of which courage and hope are born. It is able to take the initiative from its opponents' hands. It is able to give direction to its effort. A united working class can go forward to a defined goal. It can move on central positions. It has none of the doubts which, through hesitation and compromise, lead straight to defeat.

The Labour movement of this country has

The great and good of New Labour and the old Left paid £50 a head to attend a party at a fashionable London hotel to celebrate 60 years of the Labour newspaper 'Tribune'. This is the statement of intent by first editor, William Mellor, published in 1937

sought again and again, since 1919, to find terms of compromise with its opponents, and thus accepted the "inevitability of gradualness". It has insisted that there are no lessons for ourselves in the experience of continental peoples. It has declared that "it can't happen here". It has tried to purchase peace by agreement. It has even tried the policy of partial surrender.

Once at every point it has given up the initiative, capitalism has ruthlessly beaten down its standard of life in the interest of private profit. We do not blame capitalism for this; it is the inherent logic of its system.

But we must draw from our experience the lesson that, without the initiative in our hands, we shall be beaten as the Italian and German working classes have been beaten. And there can be no working-class initiative without working-class unity.

A so-called National Government has taken advantage of these divisions to move in the direction of Fascism. As the crisis deepens, it will take further advantage of them.

As it has been in domestic policies, so it has been also in the international field. The League of Nations is dead, killed by the National Government. They are now doing a cynical deal with the Fascist conquerors of Abyssinia. Their pol-

icy of non-intervention has made of Spain a shambles in which the Spanish working class are the victims ...

All is built upon the same iron necessity – capitalism must find markets in which profit can be made. And since national states are the pawns in the capitalist game, their citizens must be killed, on the battlefield and in air raids, that the owners of the instruments of production may make the profit.

It is this which has made the Labour movement socialist. It is this that has led it to insist that we can no longer patch up the capitalist system. We know now that there need be no want, no poverty, no means test, no devastated areas. They exist because capitalism exists; they are the price we pay for its continuance.

And the longer it continues, the more intense it will become. Its contradictions now can be resolved only by abandoning all the gains the working class has made this 100 years. They have gone in Italy and Germany. They are threatened in Spain. In France they have been checked only by the union of working-class forces.

Here, they are threatened too. British capitalism is on the dole. It sucks the life blood of the state for its maintenance ...

If we will the end of capitalism, we must will

the means to socialism. The first step to that end is a united working-class movement, active in challenge and attack. Fighting for immediate objectives, fighting against reaction and Fascism. It must mobilise the workers now for day-to-day struggle against the means test, for higher wages for the 40-hour week, for work in the most distressed areas.

It must work to bring into power a working-class government pledged to put into operation a workers' programme, swiftly, decisively, drastically.

That means immediate nationalisation of the banks. It means nationalisation of coal and power, land and the means of transport. It means the immediate nationalisation of the arms industry. It means the abolition of the means test. It means a great housing programme. It means the withdrawal of the aged from industry with pensions, adequate to a decent life at 60. It means raising the school leaving age to 16 with full maintenance allowances. It means a drastic upward revision of the scales of the unemployed until, by socialist planning, they are reabsorbed into work.

On the international front, it means real collective security. We must give the republican government of Spain its legal right to arms. We must tell the Fascist powers that the limit of their aggression has been reached.

We must join with France and the Soviet Union to resist their piecemeal threat to the remaining democracies of the world. As they are prepared to disarm. But as they threaten peace, so we shall defend it. For a workers' government.

Either we go forward now to socialism or there will be widespread retrogression to that Fascist barbarism into which the larger part of Europe has been plunged. For the Hitlers and Mussolinis cannot afford to wait; their grim gamble demands conquest or disaster.

Our Baldwins and Edens cannot shuffle and evade the issues they pose. The Labour movement must choose. It has now come to the turning-point of its history.

INSIDE

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Why do more people go back to Cyprus than anywhere else in the Med?

NOBODY EVER GOES JUST ONCE

Forget 42; the answer is 103

William Hartston unravels the true significance of six characters in search of a number

The most significant moment in next Monday's television programme *For the Love of ... Numbers* comes close to the end, when Don Stallybrass, an astrologer and poet, is asked when he first became fascinated by the number 42. "It was 18 May 1993," he replies with unexpected precision. "when I saw this article by William Hartston in *The Independent*".

Well, I'm terribly sorry to have to admit it, but it's time to come clean. The answer to Life, the Universe and Everything is not 42 after all. It's 103 and I can prove it. But first, the programme.

For the Love of ... Numbers (Channel 4, midnight, Monday 10 March) begins with six characters who have found the secret of the mystery of life. All you have to do, it seems, is pick a number – almost any number will do – and wait for it to turn up on a passing bus, newspaper or hotel room. If you pick a small number, you'll soon be deluged with coincidences. If you choose a large number, you get fewer hits, but the feeling of joy when your number occurs is immeasurable greater.

The superstitious sextet begin by introducing themselves and telling us their numbers. There is Gerald Suster, whose favourite number is 93 (though he later admits that his own number is in fact 419) which was a number of great significance in the life of the occultist Aleister Crowley, a biographical subject of Mr Suster. He's very impressed that we're 93 million miles from the sun, but must be disappointed by kilometres.

Then there's Nigel Bourne, a paganist and musician, and Chris Gutteridge, a nasal youth with a skinny beard, both of whom share the number 23. Graham Roos has a busier life, being fond of two, seven and 11, while Meg Pringle Adamson's number is five, "the number of freedom and expansion" – and she should know, because she writes personality reports on people based on numerological aspects of their names and dates of birth.

Don "42" Stallybrass was initially impressed when he read in this paper of the apparently coincidental occurrences of the number in various ancient religions and in the works of Lewis Carroll, all long before Douglas Adams discovered 42. Mr Stallybrass is now very fond of all multiples of his chosen number, especially 588. (You'll find a Stallybrass on page 588 of the Brighton phone directory, incidentally, and the joy he felt at being allocated room 588 in a Vienna hotel cannot be described.)

Anyway, with Jon Ronson acting the part of a hyper-gullible, totally laid-back presenter, these six participants engage in energetic and portentous chat about their numbers, saying things such as: "The universe is predicated upon number", and "23 always seems to come up in my experience when there's a random factor disrupting order" (23, incidentally, crops up a good deal in various episodes of *The Simpsons*), or "Nine, of course, is the moon number; the number of change."

"Of course" is one of those phrases that they all use in a rather different way from the rest of us. In the language of numerology, "of course" appears to mean "what I am about to say is totally unsustainable by any known form of logic". Another such word is "interesting" which is used in the sense of "mind-bogglingly dull".



Often, the conversation gives the impression of being conducted by six blinkered number-fetishists, each running in his or her own lane oblivious of all numbers other than their own. Except for the two 23s who occasionally make contact with each other, and Mr seven-eleven who is veering about all over the track. The seventh participant, the presenter, really should have been a little more critical, if only to give the others something to gang up against. As it is, they spend too much time nodding conspiratorially at each other and smugly sharing the delights of mystic enlightenment.

Seven, of course, is a very spiritual number. A recent (unpublished) communication to our letters page contained the top half torn from our front page of Tuesday, 25 February, annotated with

It is very interesting, of course, to note that the number of Germans exported from Britain for soliciting or opportunism between the years 1907 and 1915 was equal to exactly 103. Which, by a remarkable coincidence is precisely the answer that emerges from an analysis of the numerical content of a forthcoming television programme on numerology. Uncanny, or what?

letters editor chose not to publish this chilling information. It may have been that it arrived anonymously – just an annotated torn sheet of newspaper in an envelope – or it may have been on the very reasonable grounds that the year is 1997 and $1+9+9+7=26$ and $2+6=8$. Had it happened last year, we'd have been delighted, but since the first of January we've been collecting only eights. Anyway, it's good to know that there are people out there adding up the numbers of letters in all the words on our front page in search of enlightenment.

Neither seven nor eight, however, is the real answer. And neither is 42. The true answer came to me in a flash while watching a preview tape of next Monday's programme. Take the numbers given by each of the six participants when introducing themselves at the beginning and add them all together, and you get $93+2+7+11+42+23+23$ which gives a total of 206. Now 206 equals two times 103. Remember that.

Now take the word "bullshit" and add together the positions in the alphabet of its letters: $2+21+12+12+19+8+9+20$. What's the answer? Why, it's 103 again. And finally, what is the date on which this highly significant programme is to be broadcast? The 10th of March. That's the 10th day of the third month. 103 again. Uncanny.

Of course, diehard fortywits will doubtless point out that if you add the one and the three of 103 you get four, and if you subtract the one from the three you get two, which brings us back to 42. Yet there can be little doubt which of 103 and 42 has the primary role in this calculation, and which emerges as a mere corollary of numerological truth.

In view of our evident culpability in promoting the cult of fortywism on various occasions over the past few years, and with particular apologies to Mr Stallybrass, we feel that the least we can do is to offer our limited services to help in the promotion of the new religion of 103ism.

If any potential converts have details of remarkable sightings of the number 103 or its multiples, we shall be pleased to hear from them. Contributions (no prizes in this world; this is a divine calling) to: The Games Page, *The Independent*, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL. Mark the envelope "103" in a manner that will not confuse the postman. She'll collate replies and report back at a later date.

Finally, and as a cautionary tale, we end with a little numerological game played on viewers by Jon Ronson at the end of Monday's programme:

Think of a whole number between one and nine. Multiply it by nine. If your answer has two digits, add them together. Subtract five from your answer. Now work out which letter occupies the position in the alphabet given by your answer. Think of a country beginning with that letter. Take the second letter of the name of that country. Now think of an animal beginning with that letter. Imagine the colour of that animal.

Are you now thinking of a grey elephant from Denmark? No? Well, neither did I. In fact I ended up with a brownish jerboa from Djibouti. Which just goes to show that this numerological nonsense doesn't work for everyone.

Games people play

Pandora Melly learns the indirect joy of chess

Brian Sewell, art critic of the *London Evening Standard*

I haven't played rugby since I was 26 or 27, and I gave up tennis two years ago when I had my first heart attack. I feel unsure about returning to it, and I stopped skiing for the same reason. Those were my three physical games, and I feel that an important part of my life has come to an end.

Now, board games: chess is something I might still play if I could find a partner who was bad enough. I find that chess is very useful when travelling alone in Turkey. If you are stuck at a bus station, or in a dingy little village with no bus at all, with hours to kill before bed, take yourself to the nearest teahouse. Order a glass of tea, and another of Raki – the fearsome Turkish equivalent of Ouzo, and set up a chess problem. Within seconds, Turks will appear. They won't play chess with you, but it starts a conversation.

I did this once and someone asked: "Can I practise my English

with you?" His first question was: "How many princesses have you slept with?" So now you see the point of chess. After that, of course, there follows an orgy of tea-drinking and tric-trac playing, during which one learns a little Turkish and teaches a little English, and so chess has served its purpose.

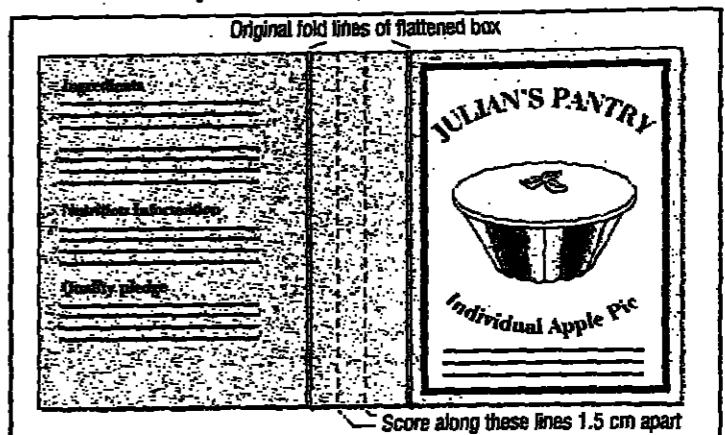
As for card games, at these I'm hopeless. And should I ever be compelled to make up a fourth at anything – and heaven forbid that it should be bridge – I have to have the rules explained at every response. I'm really such a nuisance to the other players that they soon give up and turn to drink.

Fortnum & Mason's Turkish Delight is imported directly from Turkey in a traditional wooden box containing rose, lemon, pistachio, almond, honey and apricot flavours. £9.50 for 45g (orders 0171-465-8666).

Tric-trac is a variation of backgammon using pegs as well as pieces.

Don't junk it ... use it

Personalised personal organisers from cereal packs



Forget Filofax: here's a way to make a child's (or eccentric adult's) personal notebook from discarded packets.

First pick a cardboard container with a design and product that you feel reflect your personality. Personally, I opt for the Jet Fill Premium Cartridge Refill pack, but you may prefer corn flakes or apple pie. Open the pack out flat as shown in the diagram above, with the front and back of the original carton connected by what was a side edge. That side edge will form both the spine of your organiser and the holder for its pages. Cut the cardboard to whatever size you require.

Now score two lines down the middle section as shown. These will be folded, as in the second diagram, to produce the ridge which will be used to secure the pages.

You may choose to conceal the package design in the interior of the organiser, as shown, or display it proudly on the outside. Fold along the scored lines, stick the ridge shut with glue or tape.

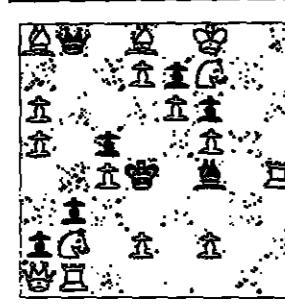
Finally, and as a cautionary tale, we end with a little numerological game played on viewers by Jon Ronson at the end of Monday's programme:

double-sided tape, punch two holes in it and that's all there is to it. When you come to load it with paper, you can use a plastic paper-clipping device, available from all esoteric stationers, but I find that a shoelace does the trick just as well and is available from any good shoe.

Bawn O'Beirne-Ranelagh

The games page is edited by William Hartston

Chess William Hartston



The first move is 1.a7! setting up the mechanism. After 1...axb1(Q) White plays 2.axb8(Q)! Qxb2 (giving the king an escape square on d3) 3.Qxb3! Oxal 4.Rxd1 mate.

After 1...axb1(R),

2.axb8(Q)! Rxb2 3.Qxb3 is stalemate, but White plays

2.axb8(R)! Rxb2 3.Rxb3

Kxc4 4.Qa4 mate.

Still more tricky is

1...axb1(B), when Black introduces the idea of Be4 into the defence. The only way to defeat it is

2.axb8(B)! Be4 3.Bxf4!

Bxa8 4.Bc5 (or mate).

The last thematic

variation 1...axb1(N)

2.axb8(N)! Nxd2 3.Oc1

Ne3 (otherwise 4.Rxf4 will be mate) 4.Ne6 mate.

Finally, and somewhat

messily, we have to fill in

the details of the mates if

Black does not promote his pawn at the first move:

1...Qxd8+ 2.Kg7! Qe7-

1...Qe5+ Qxb6 4.Rxf4; or

1...Qe5 2.Bxe7 Qd6 3.Nxd6

axb1(Q) 4.Bxf6 mate; or

1...Qe5 2.Rxf4 Qe4-

3.Qe6= Qxf4 4.Qd5 mate; or 1...Qe5 2.Rc1 Qe5 (to stop Rxf4 mate) 3.Nxe5

Be4 4.Rd4 mate.

For fifty years the

Babson task was thought

impossible, but in 1983 the

Russian Leonid Jarosh

cracked it. The diagram

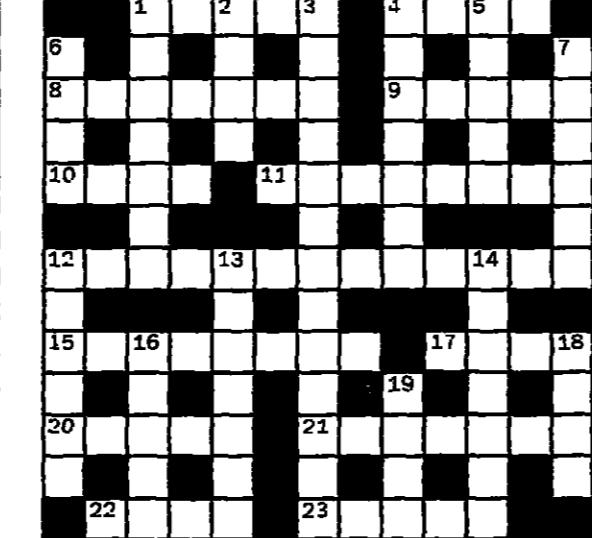
shows his extraordinary

composition. It is White to

play and mate in four.

Concise crossword

No.3241 Saturday 8 March



ACROSS

- Woodland god (5)
- Number of Muses (4)
- Radio-active element (7)
- Falter (5)
- Conceal (4)
- Ambled (8)
- OAP (6,7)
- Neighbouring (8)
- Young animal (4)
- Alcoholic drink (5)
- Food parcels? (7)
- Nurse (4)
- Decoys (5)
- Substitute (5-2)
- Catch on (3)
- Means of changing channels (6,7)
- Gwent town (7)
- Work of fiction (5)
- A great deal (4)
- English poet (6)
- Perish from hunger (6)
- Stand of fruit trees (7)
- Ardent (7)
- Estimate (5)
- Scythe (4)
- Six balls (4)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:

ACROSS: 1 Lighters, 5 Heir (Light as air), 9 Place, 10 Ukraine, 1 Triumphant, 1-3 Chrysanthemum, 16 Oppression, 20 Regalia, 21 Wheat, 22 Meek, 23 Hydrated. DOWN: 1 Lipstick, 3 Glaciers, 3 Therm, 4 Rough-and-ready, 6 Exit, 7 Reef, 8 Drench, 12 Imminent, 13 Emanated, 15 Supply, 17 Sewer, 18 Iran, 19 Ogle.

Bridge Alan Hiron

Game all; dealer South
North
♦8 3 2
♥K 5
♦A 10 7 6 5 3
♦A 5
West
♦J
♥19 8 7 4 2
♦K 9 8
♦J 10
South
♦A Q 10 9 7 6
♥A Q 6 3
♦2
♦K 3

Well pleased with the result of his safety play in his spade slam on this deal, South lost his

concentration and missed a not too difficult way of improving his chances. It happens to us all...

South opened 1♦ and rebid 2♦ over his partner's response 20.

North gave jump preference with a limit bid of 3♦ and Blackwood led to the small slam. West led CJ against Six Spades and declarer won in hand. He followed with the standard play of ♦A, guarding against a

Perplexity

Mixed Doubles

Sneer sated eel being hours rammed.

The above sentence conceals three answers. All you have to do to find them is to group the six words into three pairs, then rearrange the letters within each pair. The sender of the first correct answer opened on 19 March will win a copy of the new

singleton honour in West's hand and obviating any guesswork.

When ♦I fell, it was clear that there was only one trump trick to be lost and the only problem lay in coping with South's losing heart. As a second round of trump might allow East to play a third, South attempted to cash two top hearts. Unluckily! East ruffed the second and still had ♦K to come.

Can you see what South missed?

It would hardly have cost him to have cashed ♦A at trick three and follow by ruffing a diamond in hand. When the missing diamonds prove to be worse than 4-2, declarer can afford to lead ♦Q from hand. Now, if East holds off, it is perfectly safe to cash the two top hearts for all that East can come to is a trick with his king of trumps. So, suppose that East takes his king and leads a third trump. Declarer can win with dummy's eight, ruff another diamond in hand, and still has ♦K and ♦A on the table as entries to establish and enjoy a long diamond for a discard of the losing heart.

South opened 1♦ and rebid 2♦ over his partner's response 20.

North gave jump preference with a limit bid of 3♦ and Blackwood led to the small slam. West led CJ against Six Spades and declarer won in hand. He followed with the standard play of ♦A, guarding against a

Old Vic's master of disguise

When Michael Pennington was just 11, he was taken to the Old Vic theatre in London – “dragged there”, as he recalls, “because I knew it was going to be boring” – plonked in a seat and told to watch *Macbeth*, as impersonated by Paul Rogers. The effect was amazing. Countless early Baroque plays have said, as he now says, “It changed my life”, but in Pennington’s case it’s literally true. It was like Ruth Lawrence being given her first sum, Ryan Giggs encountering his first spherical object, Mozart hearing B flat major in his cot. Pennington went to the next production (*John Neville in Richard II*) and the next and... “They were doing all the Shakespeares here in 1954, so by the time I was 14 or 15, I’d seen the lot. It thrilled me. But it was completely unbrainy. It was sexy”.

From that day, Pennington has devoted the major part of his life to the works of the Avon swan. If his name and face are not as well known as his classical peers (Ian McKellen, say, or Alan Howard), it’s because he has remained so grimly true to the stage. His career suggests a man in the grip of an obsession, drenched and drowned in Shakespeareana. He played Hamlet in a student production when at Cambridge in 1964, and went directly from university to Stratford, has played every Shakespearean male lead except Romeo, co-founded the English Shakespeare Company in 1986 with Michael Bogdanov, the well-known critic-abuser, and toured their epic confabulation of the history plays all over the known world under the title *The Wars of the Roses*. He’s written a book about the ESC, and a notably convincing and sensitive study called *Hamlet: A User’s Guide*. Without actually changing his name to Will, and acquiring an Elizabethan ruff and a pointy beard, it’s hard to see how Mr Pennington can more forcefully express his interest in our finest poet and dramatist.

He’s also, however, been at pains to reinterpret the Bard for new generations and complexities of theatre audience – the young, the working-class, the criminal, the Third World, the disadvantaged... “The best *Twelfth Night* I ever saw,” he explains, “was in a school production at Westminster, because the innocence of the performing was wonderful. And though it’s heresy for an actor to say this, the ESC did a production of *The Tempest* in Maidstone Prison, with two professional actors and a cast

of lifers, which is easily the best *Tempest* I’ve ever seen. It’s a play, of course, that’s centrally concerned with freedom and imprisonment. Sometimes the crudeness or amateurishness of the playing affects me more than any more sophisticated treatment can. Just as the Shakespeare canon I saw in the mid-Fifties, though it was probably crudely done, and we might curl our lip at it now, it probably comes closer to the blood and thunder of what Shakespeare really is...”

Hmm. Does Mr Pennington comes across as a little too evangelical, as the kindly vicar

I think tongues are cheating when it comes to stage kissing. The audience can't see it... Playing love scenes is daft anyway!

surveying the amateur-dramatics society and muttering “Ah, bless them...”? That wouldn’t be right. In the flesh, he seems without affectation, an unusually clever, thoughtful and articulate chap, none of which adjectives can be generally applied across the acting profession. His days as a dashing romantic lead (fair-to-blond curls swept back from his handsome face and mile-high forehead) have crept past, leaving him, at 53, looking a bit lean and shrunk, his sharp eyes hooded by Garfield lids. His dryly musical, Alec McCowan-ish voice is accompanied by a lot of graceful, actorish hand gestures, but nothing that would prompt a rebuke (“And do not saw the air thus...”) from Polonius. He is the very model of a professional actor, dependable and competent but perhaps less disposed towards passionate risks than heretofore. And thus he seems the right man to play Henry Trebell, MP, the lead role in Harvey Granville Barker’s 1926 play *Wise*, which kicks off the Peter Hall rep company’s new season at the Old Vic next week.

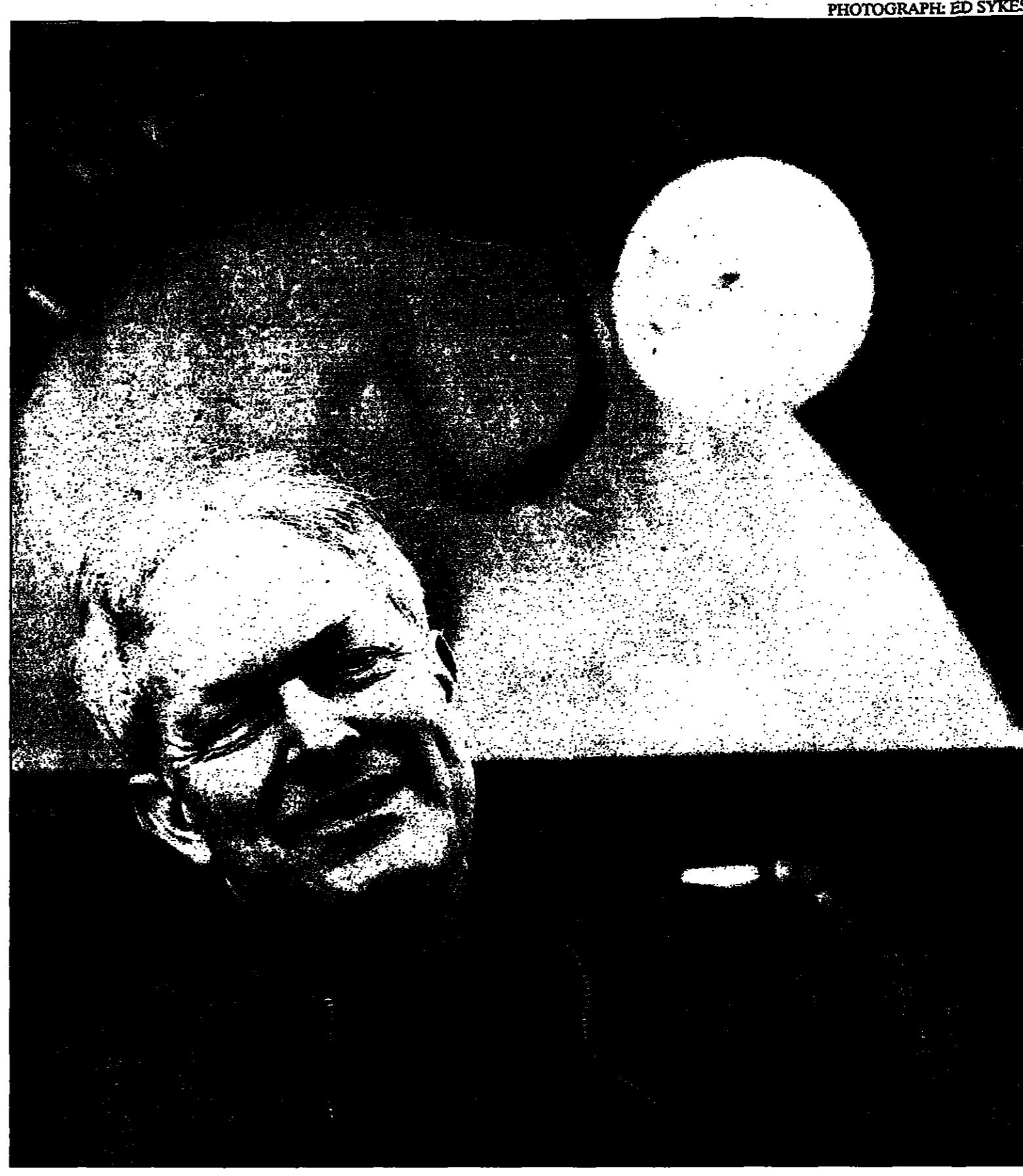
He has, of course, played dozens of non-Bard roles in his career (Chekhov is a special-

ity). But committing himself to Sir Peter’s rep company for a long season – he will also be appearing as Trigorin in *The Seagull* and Sir John Brute in Vanbrugh’s *The Provok’d Wife* – is a statement of intent for Pennington. It means he’s back in town, disdaining television and movies and touring and even Shakespeare, committing himself to the open stage and expanding his range of roles. “I do count myself lucky to have done all that Shakespeare,” he says, “but I’ve always been a character actor by instinct, a disquer rather than a self-promoter. When I first went to Stratford, I was always saying, ‘I don’t want to play the student or the lover, can I play the guy’s father of the tractor hand or something?’ He is proudest of having hoisted and sung as Archie Rice, the “saloon-bar Priapus” in Osborne’s *The Entertainer* at the Hampstead Theatre. And he was pleased with the huge risk of *Strider: the Story of a Horse*, at the National, in which he played the eponymous equine, getting inside the role by spending two grueling hours a day learning prancing and dressage at the *barn*.

And now there’s *Waste*, a drama with reassuringly Shakespearean ambitions. It’s politics vs idealism, in which Henry Trebell, an independent MP and intellectual superman, is wooed into a new Labour government and promised a seat in Cabinet on the understanding that he will steer through Parliament a bill for the disestablishment of the Church of England. But the repercussions of an affair with a loose-cannon married Catholic woman start to wreck everything, even when the Prime Minister tries to smooth it all over. It’s a very wordy, brittle and Shavian piece of work, in which everyone talks political shop, everyone schemes in tuxedos and very long sentences, and the air is thick with moral trammelling.

“Barker is as good as Shaw I think,” says Pennington, “line by line and scene by scene. He hasn’t any of that vanity and show-off quality that Shaw had. And I think I understand why he’s not as big as Shaw; it’s because his writing is so... chaste. His political arguments are very thorough. He doesn’t stop halfway through with a joke, as Shaw would. He doesn’t simplify. He asks that you listen.” He gave a small sigh, “and he’s provided the least commercial title of the century. Shaw would have called it ‘A Statesman and a Scandal’ or ‘Too Pretty to be Good’, or something...”

The role of Henry – a smarter 1926 Cecil Parkinson



John Walsh meets... Michael Pennington

– is hard to get in focus: he’s a man who is, by turns, astute, unworldly, passionate, reclusive, a cold fish, a ladies’ man, a political visionary, a political pragmatist... Pennington rises to the challenge by playing him with a near-permanent crinkly-eyed grin which only cracks when someone yells in his face. I said I thought he was miscast. Did he have a clear sense of Henry’s character? “I’m getting there. It’s not as simple as it looks. The thing is, Barker breaks one of the rules of drama, which is that a character should be just as he’s described by everyone else. But before he comes on, I say all, he’s such a solitary, he hates women – and first thing you see of the guy is when he’s literally charming the knickers off a society girl.”

The “girl” is Felicity Kendal, all flapper threads and coquettish wail, whom the text requires Mr Pennington to

kiss several times with impetuosity, let-me-devour-you enthusiasm. How had he come to terms with snogging the nation’s sweetheart every night? “I must be the luckiest man in Britain,” he gallantly replied. Did they have a bilateral no-tongues agreement? “I think tongues are cheating when it comes to stage kissing,” said Pennington seriously, “because the audience can’t see it... But playing love scenes is daft anyway. I’ve got away with it, all these years – I’ve never had to take my kit off. And now I’m too old for anyone to want me to. But for girls, well – you simply won’t get through your career without having to do it, if you’re halfway pretty...”

Back to the play. What is the “waste” the title refers to? Is it personal or political? “It’s a play about a man who’s incapable of joining in. He’s 51, he has beliefs and convictions but

he’s too proud to join in. He’s never married, never had a family. Then two things happen: he gets fired up over a political issue and joins a government; and suddenly the idea of parenthood is offered to him. Then both things are abruptly taken away and the loss – the two wastes – are enough to destroy him.”

Pennington, so adept at teasing out motivation and latent passion in Shakespeare, is frustrated by Granville Barker’s impermeable surface. “If it was Ibsen, there’d come a point where a great fissure would open in the text and all this emotional lava would come out. But Barker never allows you that. I asked Peter [Hall] at the beginning: ‘How do I show what he’s really feeling?’ You look for the place where it falls apart and you can’t find it.”

Had he met many politicians? “I sat beside Virginia

Bottomley once,” he said with evident distaste. “She came with among the constituency she’s supposed to be looking after.”

Pennington’s combative streak has surfaced at several points in his career – when globetrotting with a theatrical troupe, having blazing rows about the provision of cooked breakfasts, and when resigning from the English Shakespeare Company five years ago, after suffering the death of a thousand cuts at the hands of the Arts Council (“I threw my resignation on the table in the middle of a board meeting, stormed out and rang *The Independent*”). Today, he’s past all the actor-manager histrionics, the travelling Shakespeare Show that was the *Wars of the Roses*. He lives in Highgate and is extremely cagey about his private life: “I’m a single, heterosexual bachelor” is all he’ll volunteer to the press. Noting his strong paternal streak, I asked if he had children and yes, “I’ve a son of 30 called Mark, a very good illustrative photographer. I’m going to be a grandfather in April. Mark is living in my house in the country in Oxfordshire, so I’m dreaming of lots of grandchildren running about under the apple trees...” How sweet to encounter such a fond prospect of retirement. But, as parts go, it’s a bit on the quiet side for such a connoisseur of passion, such a cautious observer of wasted lives.

‘The Danny Baker who returned was different to the one who left’

Matt Tench
sports notebook

In an Indian restaurant last summer, a short walk from Wembley, England football fans were joyously celebrating their side’s trouncing of the Netherlands in Euro 96. As the night wore on, the numbers thinned a little, but the place was still two-thirds full when Chris Evans and Danny Baker walked in.

The pair were greeted with a mixture of boisterous camaraderie and faint embarrassment, but the contrast in their reactions was remarkable. Evans, undoubtedly the bigger star, smiled a little sheepishly and made his way to a vacant table, a beautiful woman on his arm.

Baker, though, was not going to let the moment pass.

“Do you know what this is?” he said, addressing the throng as he reached down and produced a white garment. “This is Gazzza’s shirt.”

As the cheers died down, Baker flourished a second item. “And these,” he declared, “are his socks!”

Danny Baker has never needed much encouragement to play to the

gallery, but as of this weekend, his opportunities to do so have been severely curtailed. On Wednesday, he was sacked by the BBC from his evening football phone-in show, a move which prompted him to resign from the Saturday lunch-time phone-in he co-hosts with Kelly. Richard Littlejohn, who presumably went to the same school of tact and diplomacy as Baker, takes over the Saturday show.

Both Baker’s programmes were on Radio Five Live, a station for which he has nurtured a burgeoning contempt. For now, Baker’s association with the Beeb is limited to his Sunday morning show on GLR (with tomorrow’s show now required listening for news editors across the capital).

The catalyst for the current brouhaha was Baker’s performance 10 days ago in the programme

which immediately followed the controversial FA Cup tie in which Chelsea beat Leicester City thanks to a highly debatable penalty. Baker, never slow to harangue officials, was incandescent, and devoted the bulk of his show to a series of vitriolic attacks on Mike Reed, the man who awarded the penalty.

“There is a maggot at the heart of the golden core of football, and it is referee,” he thundered. Reed, he said, should be the sacrificial lamb. “We’re going to make you responsible for all the bad decisions until there is a change.” His *coup de grace* was to suggest that Leicester fans should picket Reed’s home in Birmingham.

When, towards the end of the show, a caller suggested he was being unfair to referees, Baker responded: “Lose him, lose him, lose him. I don’t want to hear the other side. I am not interested in some kind of balanced argument.”

Not for the first time, Baker’s outbursts alarmed the BBC hierarchy and, after a week’s deliberation,

his show was axed. For many football fans, it was a sad, if inevitable, moment. Five years ago, Baker was the darling of supporters across the country with his brilliant hosting of the ground-breaking 6-0-0, Britain’s first national football phone-in.

It gave them a national platform for the first time and they came across as opinionated, passionate, and humorous; sometimes they were irrational, but rarely offensive. It played a significant part in the softening of the national image of football fans in the early Nineties.

Baker was the ideal compere. A Millwall fan, he delighted in the programme’s partiality, and spiced up the discussion with brief, stream-of-consciousness diatribes that were both mischievous and articulate.

As so often with radio stars, Baker was soon wooed to television, but his career on the box, which included a chat show, games show and Daz commercials, proved an almost unmitigated disaster, and in the past couple of years,

many were asking when Baker would return to 6-0-0. His long-term replacement was David Mellor, Tory MP and Chelsea fan, whose patronising style was in marked contrast to Baker’s genuine matiness. (Mellor can sound like a lord of the manor who has invited the estate workers to the house for their annual visit and is prepared, just this once, to talk about their interests.)

Last autumn, Baker did return to the football phone-in – not to the Saturday evening slot, which Mellor kept and to which Baker made cutting reference in his first show, but to a new programme after Wednesday night games.

The Baker who returned was very different to the one who left. The diatribes were longer and more extreme, and those callers daring enough to disagree received short, often abusive, shrift. To many, he had become a sporting “shock jock”, though he angrily denied the description on his last show.

Others detect the influence of his close friend Evans, another

who is not known to worry about giving offence. In recent weeks, Baker has encouraged Spurs fans to throw their programmes on the pitch (an illegal act), described the chairman of one club as “beni” and wished terminal illness on the board of another. Concern within the game reached such a pitch that the League Managers’ Association recently considered withdrawing good will unless both Baker’s and Mellor’s shows were taken off the air.

Baker, who is 39, has reacted to

his dismissal with characteristic good humour, and there are already suggestions that Talk Radio are interested.

Even if they are not, Baker, who writes much of Evans’ *TTF Friday*, remains much in demand as a scriptwriter. His opportunities to air his views may be much reduced, but the last thing he would want from the events of the past few days is sympathy. Those close to him suggest he has enjoyed the whole episode hugely.

David Lister is on holiday



arts & books

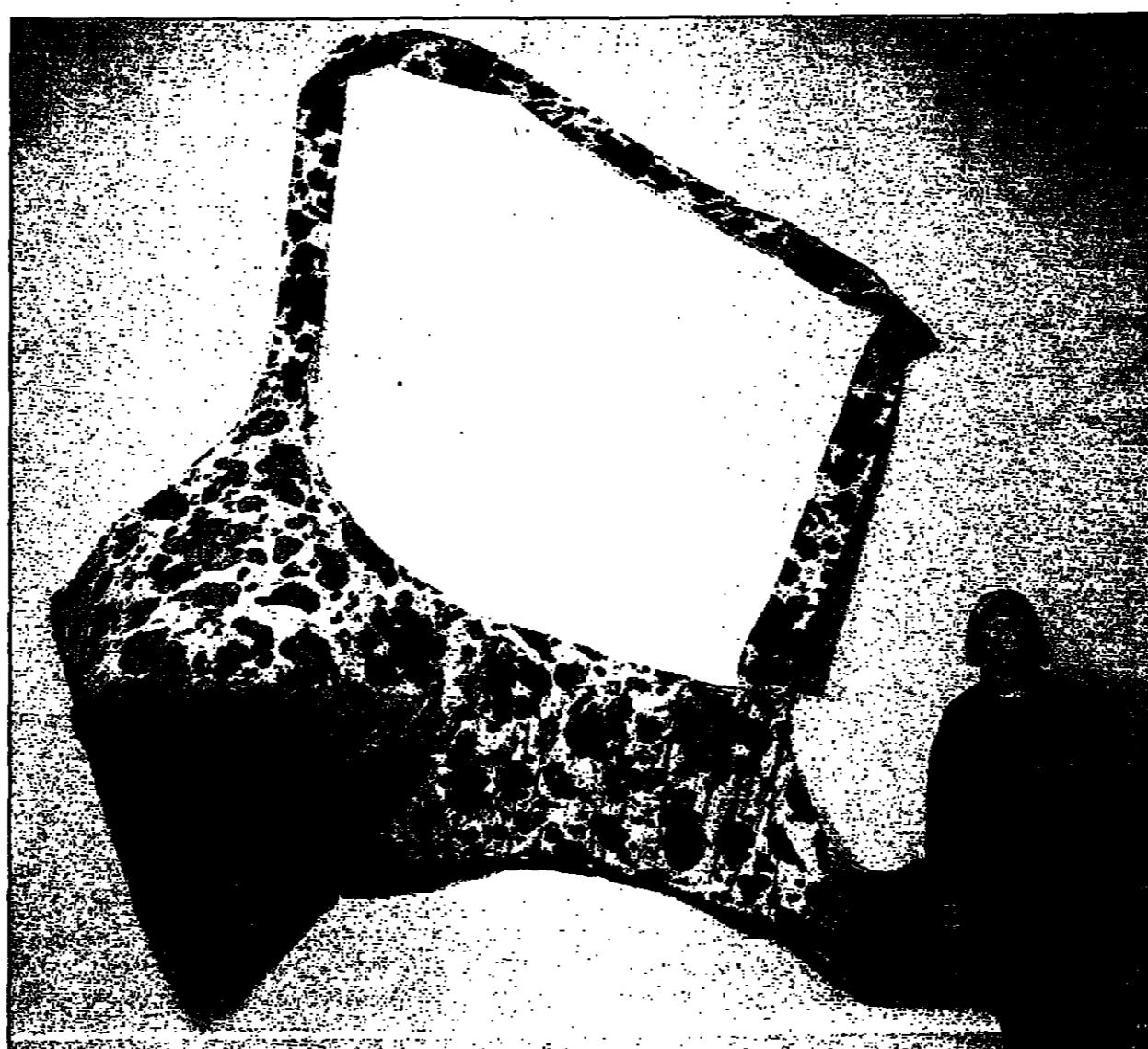
How the udder half lives

Forget knitting by the fireside: textiles are tackling big issues. By John Windsor

It looked like a feminist plot. And a thind veiled one at that. This was the Barbican's textile exhibition, *Revelation*, described by freelance curator Lesley Millar as "issue based". The issues: "The Body, Gender, Identity and the Environment".

As every man knows, textiles is women's work. Except that, these days, women "textile artists" with a sense of irony, and sometimes humour, are turning the medium against men. Instead of knitting by the fireside, they are making woolly things such as Tas Mavrogordato's tapestry *It's Thicker Than Water*, which contains images of the warring Simsons and a disturbed-looking male in a vest sitting below a broken heart. "It deals with the issues of gender stereotyping," she said, rather unnecessarily, at the exhibition opening. "Tapestry is traditionally narrative and political – an old technique that has lost its voice."

Men can play at that, too, you might think. How about a really macho tapestry made of



Liz Nilsson on her 'Cow Tit': It's a symbol – one makes a statement just as well as two

'I was a very beige child...'

David Benedict has a night out with Maureen Lipman

SOLO SHOW Live and Kidding
Duchess Theatre, London

Poor Alma Cogan. She should have died here after. In her solo show, *Live and Kidding*, Maureen Lipman joins Victoria Wood as one of the few comedienne who can work a laugh out of the Fifties singer known as "The girl with the laugh in her voice". It's a smart move. Like Alma, Lipman has made a career out of being a nice Jewish (funny) girl and her five best-selling books testify to an audience hungry for her mix of self-confidence and Jewish self-deprecation.

She once told an interviewer what she considered to be the golden rule of comedy. "Tell 'em what you're gonna do, do it, and then tell 'em you've done it. They go wild and think because they're in on the secret." It sounds prosaic, but in the right hands, this sense of complicity works a treat, and the best moments of *Live and Kidding* prove her point. "You know how it is," she seems to say, before launching into another wittily observed anecdote, and for large stretches of the evening we do.

"I was a very beige child," she announces, winning us over with tales of growing up in Hull and her subsequent "hectic, eccentric, telephobic Yorkshirewoman,"

not to mention being a wife, mother and actress. She talks about her son who is in China. "When I say that, most people think he's something big in Wedgwood." When she widens her canvas to talk about life as an actor, things become a little unstuck. Her song about Fiona Shaw-style cross-dressed casting is a tremendously adroit lyric which was great in the RSC's *Shakespeare Revue* but sounds

baffling here. Worse, instead of sticking to the personal, she starts telling jokes. Not only are they not hers, several are past their sell-by date and too many sail over her audience's heads. "Why doesn't an actor look out of the window in the morning? Because then he'll have nothing to do in the afternoon," strikes an all-too-familiar chord with the 80 per cent of Equity who are out of work, but the overwhelmingly middle-aged, middle-class, well-heeled audience don't recognise the gag.

The second half is more successful. Her Joyce Grenfell sketch of an overly talkative American woman turns from rambling amusement to genuine poignancy in a single phrase and her story of almost hyperventilating with excitement ("the baby-sitter was on a life-support machine") at meeting Barbra Streisand is classic Lipman and very funny.

Her terrifying *twitch* with the Queen at Buckingham Palace is a riot. She clocks her fellow guests: "One captain of industry, one black TV newsreader, one actress, and I knew I was in the plot of an Agatha Christie ... and someone was going to die."

Laugh? I did, but this resolutely old-fashioned evening (she's even wearing New Look-style dresses) is strangely off centre. You feel worryingly disengaged watching a performer who extracts so much humour from her own persona trading on second-hand stuff. The mostly twee songs further upset the comic rhythm, which means she keeps having to pick up her own pace. She won awards playing Ruth in Bernstein's *Wonderful Town*. What's needed with her meandering material is a little more ruthlessness.

To 5 April (0171-494 5075)

Last week's dance and classical reviews were by Louise Levene and Annette Morreau

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THE FILM Jerry Maguire

Cameron Crowe of *Singles* fame directs a new vehicle for Tom Cruise who loses his job and gains a conscience. The film has nabbed Oscar nominations for Cruise and Best Picture and done bonbo box-office in the US.

139 mins, Cert 15, Empire Leicester Square and on general release

John Lyttle pinpointed the movie's masterpiece to be transforming "a star's tardy market repositioning into a sign of the times: white collar, out of work." "It's the screenplay that stands out ... has both sharpness and bite in its incidentals," praised *The Guardian*. "Cruise gives a good performance but it hardly warrants an Oscar nomination," sniffed *The Times*. "A happy-clappy fraud of a film ... *Forrest Gump* with beauty and brains," sneered the *Standard*. "Lauded elsewhere as a witty moral fable [it] is, in fact ... deeply reactionary fare," snarled *Time Out*. "A high-decibel fanfare for the status quo," concluded the *FT*.

Crowe's script and direction gives Cruise the chance to grow up and act.

THE OPERA Orpheus and Eurydice

Lesley Garrett and Michael Chance sing in Martha Clarke's ENO staging of the 1762 version of Gluck's opera complete with happy ending, conducted by Jane Glover and designed by John Conklin in a co-production with the New York State Opera.

At the Coliseum, London WC2 (0171-632 8300) until 19 April.

Edward Seckerson eulogised over "its wonderfully subdued colourations ... beautifully mirrored in the ... texture of her staging." Not so Jane Glover's conducting in which "a greyness pervades". "Artificial," snorted the *FT*. "Achieves the almost miraculously flat of turning one of the most harrowingly emotional operas into a limp little affair," wittered *The Guardian*. "I quite liked Clarke's attempt to free Gluck from the neo-classical tag: no Ionic pillars or white togas," smiled *The Telegraph*. "Honest, beautiful simplicity in this big space ... there is nothing monochromatic about Jane Glover's conducting," asserted *The Times*.

A weak ending from all departments spoils an otherwise strong evening.

THE PLAY Women on the Verge of HRT

Marie Jones's part-populist, part-propagandist new play about menopausal women has songs by Neil Martin. The West End opening after its premiere in Northern Ireland in 1995, Jones also stars with Eileen Pollock under Pam Brighton's direction.

At the Vaudeville, London WC2 (0171-836 9987). Booking until 31 May.

Paul Taylor found it "an enjoyable but patchy comedy". "Hardly great but it undoubtedly offers honest, professionally outspoken entertainment on a subject which could cause complacent men in the audience a few hot flushes of their own," mused *The Telegraph*. "Deeply provincial ... merely a soft feelgood con." Menopausal defiance, when given ballad treatment, turns into marshmallow," frowned the *FT*. "It's a forceful, pugnacious evening but, at the end, I had the feeling that in telling a West End audience that women over 40 should have a full, rich sex life, it was preaching to the converted," preached *The Guardian*.

The flipside of the Cliff Richard experience. A refreshing change from all the "Boy's Own" new plays.

LAURIE LEWIS

GERAINT LEWIS



Panto? Oh yes it is

It may be March, but tickets for Hotwells 'Aladdin' are like gold dust. By Philip Sweeney

There are two hot tickets in Bristol this weekend. Not the Theatre Royal's acclaimed production of *As You Like It* – plenty of seats still available. The only venues sold out weeks ago are the Hippodrome, for the English National Ballet, and a considerably smaller institution, a mile away out in Hotwells, the Hope Centre, where tickets for the annual pantomime in its usual eccentric March slot, are like gold dust.

The Hope Centre is a converted 18th-century stone congregational chapel, standing squarely among ivy-clad gravestones in the hilly tangle of Georgian and Victorian terraces comprising Hotwells and Clifton Woods. This is a homely, mixed area, middle class mostly, but rarely posh, a sort of Notting Hill to the Kensington of its grander neighbour, Clifton. In the 18 years since its rescue from demolition and conversion into a community centre, the Hope Centre has offered theatre and music shows, sports, a creche, yoga classes, dances, a weekly market, and lunches of startlingly high quality in its small schoolroom-like cafe. Since 1981, the Hope Centre's flagships fund-raiser has been the pantomime, an institution of sufficient legend that relatives and expatriate Hotwellians converge for the weekend from as far afield as Sussex.

Why March? "A group of us were sitting around one day after Christmas saying how dull January and February are, so we decided to fill the gap," says Sue Stops, pantomime founder and joint director of this year's production of *Aladdin*. It's a Wednesday evening in February and already halfway through the traditional production schedule: Mrs Stops, a teacher, has an astute grasp of thespian behaviour, formed by 17 years of pantos and a brother in the business as a member of the Bristol



is the Hong Pong isn't exactly good nor really bad. Paul Crosswhite, a physics teacher and father of one of the most pantomime-imbued families in Hotwells, is refining the leers and cackles of his Abanazar – "just about the nastiest, slimpest and most dishonest person to appear in the Hotwells panto" – while his 15-year-old daughter, Jenny, making her starring debut as Princess Bel, adjusts the kimono

she's found for her costume. Upstairs, social worker Cathy Crosswhite, Jenny's mother, is cutting out costume patterns and studying dance routines as a member of the Ambras, a comic female dance chorus named after the local street, ever since their debut with *The Dance of the Ambra Vales*. This rehearsal begins with an announcement by Rick Goldsmith, chartered accountant, treasurer of the Hope Centre management committee and temporary emuuch. "Bit of a cash crisis this month at the Hope Centre – if everyone could try to get ticket money in advance it'd be a great help."

The pantomime, it transpires, is of greater significance than ever this year. Bristol council leisure committee has just cut Hope Centre's support grant by £6,000, on the grounds that it's not an arts institution, which threatens the operation of the centre's programme through the summer and could in turn undermine credibility in applying for £700,000 of lottery money to fund a major expansion. The pantomime, entirely paid for by its participants, brings in £1,000 a night in ticket money, a significant chunk in a total turnover of £100,000. Annie Scott, architect to the Hope Centre scheme, Sour of Abanazar's baddie trio, Sweet, Sour and Sorry, and mother of two other architects, one Wishy Washy, the other resting, explains the economic situation. "We want to excavate the vault to enlarge the bar, reopen the main entrance and expand the auditorium. The folding seating needs to be replaced, to increase capacity from 110 to 300, which will allow bigger audiences and more profits."

The success of the Hotwells pantomime is founded on more than just community spirit and high jinks. The scripts manage to balance broad humour, fun for the kids and more sophisticated overtones for the

adults. Centres of excellence have developed in the fields of both scenery and music, overseen respectively by Janet Magrie and Sue City. Janet Magrie, an art historian, first heard of the pantomime from a fellow passenger on an architectural coach tour in Germany, moved to Bristol, signed on as scene painter and got booked. This year, she's marshalling a coup of dozen volunteers and a budget of £30, most of which has gone on a huge roll of white nylon to create willow-pattern backdrops, caves and castles. Local artist Liz Vibert is painting two giant portraits of the High Pong and scientific editor and puppeteer Di Steed is creating a giant working mangle for the laundry scene.

Sue City, solicitor, music teacher and community activist, is directing as always a full eight-piece band, including a member of the National Youth Chamber Orchestra on cello.

On Thursday night, 30 hours of increasingly frantic rehearsals bear fruit, and amid much wishing of "break a leg", it's first night. Of the whole, things go well. Tim Stevens invests the High Pong with sufficient mournful quirkiness to get laughs. Local GP Keith Erskine is a splendidly fruity Widow Twankey and a *coup de théâtre* is provided by the eunuchs' chorus, operating temporarily as the Fish Gunters, who produce handfuls of pink foam entrails from their fish in mid-song to shower the

audience. On the other hand, the washings lines jam and the smoke shows a tendency to follow rather than precede the genies. Afterwards, in the Ruse of Denmark, the cast post-mortem the evening – the blunders, the triumphs, the celebrities in the audience like the Lord Mayor and the actor Norman Bowler from *Emmerdale*, whose wife, Di, is an Ambra. Sue Stops, trenchant as ever, has more serious matters in mind – professional peer approval. "Terry Milton of the Hedley Players is coming on Saturday. They're really good. We're going to have to tighten it all up." *Hotwells' Aladdin is sold out. For further information about events at the Hope Centre, Hotwells, Bristol call 0117-921 5271*



PHOTO: CHRISTOPHER JONES

Out of the ashes of war...

... Cologne experienced a musical explosion. But now the orchestral good life is under threat. Michael Church looks to the future

When the Allies had finished with Cologne, it looked like the surface of the moon. In the centre only the cathedral was left standing, as though protected by some macabre miracle from the surrounding devastation. But this had always been a musical city, and it was music which helped set it back on its feet.

A year after war ended, the local radio station was given a symphony orchestra. And, as its current boss Heiner Müller-Adolphi explains, this orchestra saw its prime job as administering cultural first-aid. "People desperately wanted to hear the music they had missed during the Nazi regime: Schoenberg and Webern and Bartók and jazz – all the things which had been proscribed as decadent. They felt completely cut off from international musical life." When the new radio building was opened in 1953, Stravinsky marked the occasion by conducting the first German performance of his opera *Oedipus Rex*. A year later, the radio station spawned a baroque ensemble.

It also gave birth to something with bigger repercussions. Tape recordings had been pioneered by German radio, but it was the Frenchman Pierre Schaeffer who in 1948 first used one to produce that collage of "found" sounds known as *musique concrète*. In 1951 Cologne Radio went one better and founded the electronic



Music helped a devastated Cologne back on its feet HULTON GETTY

studio where Karlheinz Stockhausen launched the experimental odyssey on which he is still engaged today. His *Gesang der Freude* – in which the recording of a boy singing the *Benedicite* was spliced with electronically generated sound – represented music's boldest leap since Schoenberg.

As Stockhausen got into his stride, composers like the Romanian Iannis Xenakis and the Italian Luigi Nono joined in. Meanwhile Hans Werner Henze and the Argentinian Mauricio Kagel came to stay – and also, with Stockhausen, to teach at the new conservatoire. Students who caught the virus of experimentalism stayed on as professional performers; thanks to the avant-garde policies of the radio orchestra, they found a ready-made public. Thus did Cologne become the new-music capital of the world. Even today, Stockhausen (putting quartets in helicopters), Henze (reverting to romanticism) and the increasingly Dadaist Kagel are local éminences grise, while their students roam performance-art's wilder shores.

Cologne's cathedral precinct bristles with music shops, several of which a book entitled *Music Land* is prominently displayed. This is significant: musicians in Germany's 120 state orchestras have rights that are the envy of musicians elsewhere. They can earn over £40,000 a year, and are all on life-contracts.

They can go in at 21, and retire 44 years later after a stress-free career (there seem to be no tales in Cologne to match London's horror stories of second violinists devouring beta-blockers before they play).

But, as all the world knows, Ger-

many's economic miracle is on the point of collapse, and the orchestral good life is suddenly under threat. A straw poll of key musical figures in Cologne reveals sharp disagreement over the future of these luxuriant contracts. Müller-Adolphi says he has

long wanted to see three-year contracts – "otherwise people can get lazy, go soft" – but the unions have always vetoed that. "But as cities start to go broke, they will not be able to afford life-contracts any more. Finally the unions will have to accept this."

Not so, says a senior cellist in his orchestra. "Life-contracts are normal in all German professions, and no conductor or administrator will be able to change it. If you are at the top level of ability, you have the right to be safe in your employment." Yes, age may sometimes reduce physical competence – "but, if you are older, you have more experience, so it balances out." An administrator at another orchestra, despairing at the difficulty of trying to remove tired players, glumly remarks that it would actually be easier to close orchestras down than abolish life-contracts.

Hans vonk, the laid-back Dutchman who has been principal conductor of the Radio Symphony Orchestra for the past six years, is glad for his players' good fortune – and rates their work high – but thinks a shade more stress might produce even better results. That's as may be, however, because at the end of this season he's off to St Louis – succeeding the charismatic Leonard Slatkin – and his departure is provoking frantic manoeuvres behind the scenes.

For, as Munich is currently finding

– conductorless since the death of Celibidache – there are not enough charismatic conductors to go round. The RSO has appointed a "finding committee" with representatives from the rank and file, and everyone has had the right to make nominations. These have been whittled down to three – André Previn, Neeme Järvi and Semyon Bychkov – each of whom is currently doing concerts which are, in effect, auditions. The contest is all very gentlemanly, and it's all officially denied, but everyone can sense that some fundamental change is in the air.

At which point it seems appropriate to seek the view at Cologne's 10-year-old Philharmonie – acoustically one of the best halls in the world. Business, say its bosses, has never been better, and that goes for the avant-garde stuff as well. This spring they are holding their second Musikrittenfeste, in which the names of Rattle, Barroboim, Kremer and Björk figure with equal prominence. On two successive nights I find the 2,200-seater hall packed, with long queues for returns.

Music in post-war Cologne has followed a huge arc – rising from the ruins, cruising the heights – but it's not going to crash back down to earth just yet.

Cologne RSO on tour: Sun, Bridgewater Hall, Manchester (0161-907 9000); Mon, RFH, London (0171-960 4242; Tue, Symphony Hall, Birmingham (0121-212 3333)

French without tears

DANCE Decoufle, New Victoria Theatre, Woking

Remember the 1992 Winter Olympics opening ceremony?

Me neither. However, this television extravaganza catapulted the dancer-maker and illusionist Philippe Decoufle to fame. His latest show, *Decoufle*, has been touring Europe to packed houses since 1995 and is currently making its farewell performances as the highlight of the Woking Dance Umbrella. When I last saw Decoufle's company at London's Almeida Theatre 10 years ago in Technicolor he was working on a far humbler scale, content with a handful of men and a stepladder. Yet all the elements were in place: the acrobatic dance, the circus skills, the Gallic wit and whimsy – lessons learnt at the feet of men like Marcel Marceau and Alwin Nikolais. The American showman's early influence, combined with Decoufle's more recent collaboration with costume fantasiist Philippe Guillemin, gave birth to *Decoufle*, a surreal hybrid of dance and circus.

The work is filled with other-worldly images delivered in bewildering succession. Stripy dancers with their feet encased in giant fist-tail imps loll about the stage while Dominique Willoughby's flickering projections play on their eerily phosphorescent costumes. A figure enters, his hands replaced by shaking tentacles four-feet long, which flick around his body like huge fly whiskers. Enter two men in suits carrying a bald man in a vast inflatable

Ruling passion

CLASSICAL Monteverdi's *Orfeo* Queen Elizabeth Hall, London, and touring

Kent Opera's carefully paced resurrection has gained fresh energy with a compelling production of Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, accessible in style and delivered by an attractive young cast. Here is a company determined to make the most of its resources and committed to the idea of stimulating its audiences, a combination that made up for any occasional shortcomings in the quality of its performers.

The dramatic power of Monteverdi's work was revealed without robbing any of its intimacy, projecting Orfeo's despair clearly and underlining the character's frailty. Tim Carroll's staging proved satisfyingly simple, enlivened by Terry Gilbert's graceful treatment of the choral dances and assured choreography elsewhere. Kent Opera stalwart Roger Butlin struck a convincing balance between classical austerity and Baroque excess in his designs, presenting a monolithic backdrop to the realm of Hades and conjuring up a lurid vision of its infernal inhabitants that would have pleased Peter Greenaway. Paul Grier's blubbery Charon was suitably repellent, wearing a bald wig, a leather corset and enough chains to suggest that fans of bondage need not abandon all hope of fun in the Underworld.

Gwion Thomas was in heroic form as Orfeo, rich of voice and entirely at ease with the wide range of his part. The smoothness of his legato and effortless delivery of the text gave an

impression of Italian warmth, not always reproduced by others in the cast who stumbled over the diphthongs and other linguistic hurdles of Anne Ridder's idiosyncratic English translation. Above all, Thomas had an innate feeling for the style of Monteverdi's monody, outlining his plea to Charon in the third act with heart-breaking tenderness and bringing an unforced naturalness to his final lament for Euridice. Likewise, Rachel Wheatley's pure-voiced Euridice, Juliet Schlemann's alluring Hope and Clara Sanabria's Messenger were founded on the principles of good singing, expressive in their response to the text and imaginative in their variations of tone colour. The Pluto of Martin Robson was suitably implacable, a cold-hearted complement to the likeable Proserpina of Esther King, while Paul Grier suggested that beefy Charon was blessed with a hint of human kindness.

Rhythmic freedom was encouraged by music director John Toss and his admirable team of continuo players. Debates about the speed of dances and the ritornelli in early Baroque opera seem irrelevant when a work is conditioned by a desire to highlight the drama and passion of the music. Toss focused on the tragedy of Orfeo and Euridice, which was exploited by the company's principal players and convincingly conveyed in the choral numbers following Euridice's death. Andrew Stewart

FUN LOVIN' CRIMINALS

CLASSICAL Monteverdi's *Orfeo* Queen Elizabeth Hall, London, and touring

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Fun Lovin' Criminals

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Songs at twilight

Terry Eagleton
treads softly on
an Irish bard's
dreams



W B Yeats: 'Torn all his life between the smell of horses and the odour of sanctity'

W B Yeats: a life. Vol I: The Apprentice Mage, 1865-1914
by R F Foster,
Oxford University Press, £25

You were silly like us," WH Auden wrote of Yeats, but he was really just being polite: Yeats was a lot sillier than almost any of us. Few poets of comparable

greatness have believed such extravagant nonsense. Spiritualism, theosophy, astral bodies, occultism, and (some would add) Irish Fenianism, Yeats managed to swallow all of this, along with regular doses of hashish and mescaline. "I was once afraid of turning out reasonable," he wrote to a colleague, but the anxiety was quite misplaced.

At one spiritualist seance, he was urgently buttonholed by a ghostly voice as "Mr Gates", consoling evidence that not even the spirit world is free from human error. Yeats displayed a remarkable capacity to credit almost any high-toned gobbledegook currently in fashion, and in the spook-ridden *fin-de-siècle* there was a lot of it on offer. This was especially true of pre-revolutionary Ireland, where it was easy to cross over from gun-running

to Rosicrucianism. But Yeats combined this gullibility with a tough-minded refusal of anything as vulgarly constricting as belief, and for the most part kept it well out of his poetry, like some brilliant surgeon who proves able to stitch up a heart even when hallucinating.

He was also more contradictory than most of us. If he was occult and oracular he was also an operator, scheming and caballing in quarrelsome Ireland while preserving an air of disinterested Olympian wisdom. Investing a ferocious Victorian energy in post-Victorian affairs, he launched the Irish literary revival and the Abbey theatre, but was so absent-minded that he once had to ask a waiter at his club whether he had eaten his dinner or not.

He was a Protestant gentleman among nationalist schoolteachers, a hardheaded businessman who believed in fairies, a distinguished man of letters who couldn't spell the word "feef", a would-be aristocrat who lounged in country houses and celebrated the simple peasantry. A charming, distractingly lofty aloof from politics, he was in later life an enthusiast for racist eugenics, blood élites and the cleansing power of military violence. As a flamboyant egocentric, he dreamed of

extinguishing the self, and was torn all his life between the smell of horses and the odour of sanctity.

It is doubtful that Yeats would have altogether approved of biographies, though he penned one or two such fragments himself. What he valued in life was what could be transmuted into art, which life could then imitate if it pleased; and like his compatriot Oscar Wilde, he conducted his personal existence as a kind of public mythology. The self was not something to be observed buttering toasts or putting the cat out but was a sort of artistic self-fashioning, an heroic enterprise to be lived with one canny eye on how it would all look to the historians. Ordinary life could be left to servants and shopkeepers – or to the materialist English, whose passion for realist novels he always thought faintly ill-bred.

The official biography, even so, is here at last, after two false starts: one by the critic Denis Donoghue, and one by the Irish historian Leland Lyons, or "British Leland", as those compatriots who found him a shade too suburban-English might have called him. *The Apprentice Mage*, which takes Yeats's life up to the brink of his fiftieth year, is a marvel of painstaking historical research, which distils a formidable heap of evidence into a

splendidly elegant narrative. R F Foster has a remarkably shrewd, worldly-wise sort of mind, at once tough and generous, and resists both idolatry and iconoclasm in this magnificently sane account. It is also for the most part a remarkably judicious, even-handed portrait, which in the snake-pit of Irish studies these days is something of a minor miracle.

As a leading "revisionist" Irish historian, Foster is well-known for his suave massaging of Irish history to take the pain of out of it: the man who made Connemara safe for Camden Town. There are hints of that here – Yeats's lover Maud Gonne is hammered for her anti-Semitism but uncredited for her work among women – but the High Table scoffing at aspects of Gaelic culture which distinguishes his work elsewhere is here thankfully muted.

In another sense, however, this book lacks some of Foster's sterling historical virtues. His work *Modern Ireland* displays a kind of long-headedness, a plucking of trends and patterns from the ruck of historical detail, which *The Apprentice Mage* notably lacks.

This meticulous, blow-by-blow account, which takes Yeats from his art-school days through to the Irish Revival, London literary life, early nationalism, the founding

of the Abbey theatre and his first encounters with Ezra Pound, commits the familiar biographer's mistake of concealing the wood with the trees: Intent on his deft brushstrokes, Foster hardly ever steps back from the canvas to size up the full figure evolving beneath his art. That he can discern significant patterns is clear enough; it is just that he too often fails to let the reader in on them. One has the curious sense that Foster knows quite a bit more about Yeats than he is telling us.

After some quarter-of-a-million words, it is hard to know what, say, Yeats's dominant aesthetic ideas were, or how to assess the relations between his work and European modernism. What was it about a late 19th-century colonial backwater which managed to produce such a world-class poet, and how was Yeats at once the child of that context and creatively askew to it? Foster's whole treatment is too briskly externalised, too much a question of the dental treatment which kept the poet in London during a June heatwave.

Understandably anxious that other biographers have been there before him, Foster has decided to concentrate less on what the poet wrote than on what he did; but it is a hard distinction to sustain, and in any case Yeats's poetry enthrals us more than his dining habits. One suspects that it might enthrall Foster more too, given the fineness of his odd flashes of literary analysis; but the sensitive critic is grimly subordinated to the workaday historian. For all its perceptiveness, the book is oddly unreflective.

Some English readers, obsessed with "real life" and sceptical of big ideas, will doubtless find this limitation a virtue. But this sumptuous, astutely intelligent work hasn't even much bold revaluation to offer of the life. Here, at least, one could wish for a little more abrasive revisionism. *The Apprentice Mage* marvellously fills out the familiar contours of the poet's frenetic life, but does little to reshape them. After some 500 pages, we know incomparably more about this self-myologising maestro than we did, but little of what we learn challenges the received images of him.

Perhaps such an overview will emerge in Volume Two, but by then there will be an enormous amount to summarise. Anyway, it will be interesting to see how Foster deals with the more embarrassing aspects of his protagonists' later quasi-fascist views – whether their repugnance will be blandly massaged away, or candidly confronted.

Fillips from the Prince

Piers Brendon meets the best sort of consort

Albert: uncrowned king by Stanley Weintraub, John Murray, £25

It's hard to see how a biographer could find anything new to say about Prince Albert short of suggesting, as Lytton Strachey wanted to, that he was a homosexual or (in the spirit of Michael Bloch) that he was a woman. With heroic restraint Professor Stanley Weintraub advances no such proposition. But he must have felt more than usually tempted to embrace novelty, for he has already written a long life of Queen Victoria.

The present book – much better than its error-prone predecessor – is therefore, in his phrase, a "parallel biography". However, almost from the first it is intimately entwined.

After a miserable childhood in the dissolute Coburg court, Albert inexplicably emerged as a full-grown Victorian – earnest, diligent, priggish and philoprogenitive. Coburg being, as Bismarck remarked, the royal "stud-farm of Europe", Albert was presented to the wifely young Victoria, who swiftly fell in love with him. She was entranced by his handsome appearance: "such beautiful blue eyes, and exquisite nose, and such a pretty mouth with delicate moustachios". Albert reciprocated. Writing to Lord Melbourne after her "most gratifying and bewildering" wedding night, Victoria said that she never thought she "could be so loved".

Familiar stuff, but Weintraub does his best to avoid the inevitable overlap by focusing on the character and career of the Consort. He crafts a vivid, gossipy and sometimes irrefutable portrait, without the retrospective sycophancy that entreats so many English royal biographies. And he gives an account of

princely industry which is awesome even in recapitulation.

Albert strove to improve working-class housing and to modernise the army. He promoted the arts and sciences. He supported innumerable charities and chaired interminable committees. He was patron of the London Library, Chancellor of Cambridge University and president of the Society for the Extinction of the Slave Trade. Albert not only masterminded the Great Exhibition but checked to see if the objects displayed at the Crystal Palace were correctly labelled. And he oversaw the spending of its profits on the complex of museums, colleges and concert halls in South Kensington, nicknamed Albertopolis.

Despite his efforts, or because of them, the Prince was never really popular. At first regarded as an alien fortune-hunter, he was later lampooned (in ribald terms) as the procreator of a race of royal parasites. Albert gave offence by his frigid hauteur (partly a result of shyness about speaking English) and by his obvious boredom with high society. He preferred servants, but even they were churlish: Carlyle referred to "His Serene Highness the Incarnate-Solemn Prince Albert". In 1854 crowds rejoiced outside the Tower of London when it was rumoured that Albert was imprisoned there for treason.

The politicians were also ungracious. Melbourne resented the upright Albert, complaining that "this damned morality will undo us all". Peel, whom the Prince revered, told the cabinet that the royal couple should not be thwarted but managed. Palmerston regarded Albert as an exalted nuisance. Disraeli, suspected by the Prince of harbouring dangerous "democratic tendencies".

He loved the luxurious royal yacht and failed to notice that all non-royal personages on board were consigned to



Albert: 'Victim of rifle-mania'

In the key of life

Dermot Clinch detects some false notes

A sequential story. By Jonathan Buckley, Fourth Estate, £9.99

This novel, "Isn't necessarily a straight story," So be warned. In *The Biography of Thomas Lang* – biography by name, fractured post-modern novel by nature – there is not straight story in sight. The novel is framed as an exchange of letters, though also stuffed with essay, allegory, fable. Though containing biography it expends plenty of time and effort questioning biography's purpose.

Thomas Lang is a recently deceased pianist. He performed with Karajan and Abbado; his playing was "marked by fierce control and economy of means"; he refused to give encores, but the applause would be in "full spate" ten minutes after his last bow. He was a "genius", his biographer tells us. All looks set for a ripping biography – except that the author, Michael Dessauer, has a problem. His principal source – Lang's brother – is not cooperating.

The biographer's campaign of coaxing letters,

As Melbourne sagely advised the dispossessed Victoria, if Britons ever got into the way of making their kings they would soon get into the way of unmaking them. So "Albert the Good", as his wife's sobriquet "Queen Albertine" piquantly suggests and as this book entertainingly confirms, had to make do with being sovereign in all but name.

allegorical tale examining the selective nature of love and understanding? The Lady of Doriolan, pages 139–147, is such an one. What is a biography? What is the nature of performance, of artistic sincerity? The reader may not emerge with the answers. But if any of the author's admirably sharp musical scepticism rubs off on us we'll be doing just fine.

It's a sharp, intelligent novel, which makes its single, overwhelming misjudgement the more surprising. Dessauer we can put up with. He is a pedant, but he is credible. The Lang brothers are not. A more arch, irritating pair of characters, in fact, I have never spent time with. Instead of having a plain lunch, Thomas speaks of "doing battle with a bacterial baguette". This taxes our patience enough. But Christopher, with his parody of camp superiority in every utterance, takes us over the edge. "Musings on musicianship are like watching elephants waltzing over daisies," reads one letter critical of the biographer's method. "There is no reason to be ashamed of dedication to the quotidian, as Tom might once have told me, *senior VII*." The quotidian task of Dessauer is to read these affected, squirming letters. The reader's duty may just lead elsewhere.

The narrative, such as we can piece it together, is neatly constructed. But it's the stuffing of ideas that Jonathan Buckley is really bothered about. Want to read an essay on "Busoni Contra Wagner"? Lang wrote one and here it is. Keen on "cod-Arthurian"

Barre room brawls

Michael Church on body language

Reading Darcey

by Judith Mackrell

Michael Joseph, £20

The was when the "meaning" of dance was crystal-clear: the numbed conventions of story-ballets left audiences in no doubt as to the goodies and baddies who were unhappy, and why. When the Fairies of *Fairy*, Generosity and Eloquence took the stage at the Swan Lake ball, each moved in a manner consonant with her quality. When the magic worked, there was mystery in abundance, but no mystification. This art was accessible to all who could afford a ticket.

If contemporary dance is "about" anything, it's usually about itself: fine for initiates, but deeply mystifying for everyone else. Judith Mackrell's book may sound like a postgrad primer, but she opens with a nicely popular question: if there is a language of dance, how can we understand it? Her answer is encouraging: all we need is "a willingness to let the movement play on our senses, to let its rhythms charge up our pulses, and to let its pictures range around our imaginations".

Dance, she says, is as ambiguous as music; we discuss its patterns in terms of architecture, balance, line; we speak of bodies having sculptural form; we call dance abstract. But this, she argues, contradicts a basic truth about dance, which is that it is always human. As abstraction's pioneer Balanchine observed, "Put a man and a girl on stage and there is already a story. A man and two girls, there's already a plot."

Mackrell plots the course by which Petipa's *Swan Lake* has transmogrified into Matthew Bourne's male-swan crowd-puller via a series of stylistic revolutions. The aristocratic elegance of Tsarist ballet was upended by Diaghilev, who harnessed the brightest talents from all the arts to forge his astonishing amalgam. Choreographic revolutionary though he was, Nijinsky still kept faith with his balletic roots: Isadora Duncan and Martha Graham shook dance free of classical convention. The pull of gravity, which ballet had denied, was now embraced. Emotion became raw; a new breed of woman emerged.

Then came Merce Cunningham, aided and abetted by John Cage. His choreography was determined by the throw of dice and set to the pulse of a stop-watch. There came minimalism – "No to spectacle no to virtuosity no to transformations and magic and make-believe" shrieked a manifesto – and its attendant obsessions with ordinariness, improvisation, and trance-like repetition. Meanwhile ethnic minorities – black in America, Asian in Britain – were enriching the mixture. The dance world fragmented into a thousand schools, each with its resident guru. Past gurus had emerged by apostolic succession – Paul Taylor worked for Martha Graham, and nurtured Twyla Tharp and Pina Bausch. Today's gurus emerge from media studies seminars.

Mackrell is outstandingly good on the masterpieces created in St



Ballet go upwards: Daniel Ezralow in action on the edge of a high hill taken from 'Dancers' by Philip Trager (Bullfinch)

Petersburg and Paris. Her prose is clean, vivid, and evocative; her vignettes on *Giselle*, *Apollo*, and the *Rite of Spring* are superb pieces of critical writing. Her short essays on Isadora and Graham give more illumination than whole books have done in the past. But half-way through *Reading Dance* something unfortunate happens. Mackrell's prose acquires a hyperbolic, pro-

motional tinge. As she deals with contemporary hot-shots, that tinge grows stronger. One misses the critical edge needed to demystify boredom-merchants like Rosemary Butcher and Richard Alston, and to put slick operators like DV8's Lloyd Newson – the Damien Hirst of dance – in their rightful place. When Siobhan Davies makes a work about "the rich set of feelings

that dancers get as they make a dance", Mackrell nods approvingly. She doesn't seem bothered that for many choreographers, process now counts for more than product.

"Subverting the bourgeois complicity between performer and audience" is the sort of bogusness dance-radicals love but – as Matthew Bourne's hit *Swan Lake* proved – that complicity has a

healthy way of reasserting itself. Mackrell is far too sane and intelligent not to welcome this return to the juiciness of music, story, and spectacle, but she still champions her campus gurus. For such people and their students, her book will be required reading. The rest of us may find in it – with its ruminations on partnering, scoring, staging, and filming – much food for thought.

Are the claims substantiated? If not, then it is only because Berlin himself has outsmarted them. One of his bravura pieces is "The Hedgehog and the Fox" (1953), which takes as its starting point a fragment of Antilochus: "The fox knows many things but the hedgehog knows one big thing." Berlin applies this to the author of *War and Peace*.

Tolstoy is torn, he argues,

between rival and finally incompatible positions. Foxes are free-floating empiricists. They respond to events as they occur. Hedge-

hogs are rationalists, committed to the myth that all phenomena are reducible to a single system. They insist all knowledge forms a seamless unity. As a novelist, Tolstoy is foxy alert to the moment. He regularly captures the fleeting and the ineffable. It is when he turns his attention to the theory of history that the hedgehog bristles into view. Human beings, he suggests, are never more than symptoms of great but unseen forces – fate!

Berlin's own cosmogeny, peopled by European and Russian thinkers, abounds with both species, pluralists and monists.

He sides with the pluralists. Monism, he asserts many times in these pages, is the stuff of authoritarianism; and as a Jew born in Latvia, who witnessed the Revolution in Moscow before his family emigrated, he has every reason to distrust any system. If Hegel was Marx's mentor, he also provided key strands of Nazism.

Berlin's outstanding contribu-

tion to political theory has been his espousal of "value pluralism". There is not (he advances), nor can there be, a true convergence of human values. Even in one culture, such values are innately rivalrous. Man is born to disagree.

The business of politics is not to attempt to resolve all differences, but to accommodate a natural diversity.

In "Two Concepts of Liberty", Berlin orchestrates his philosophy with the notion of "negative liberty", insisting that freedom cannot be legislated.

Only the removal of restraints

can enable such a subjective affair.

Typically, it is communist, fascist and ultra-nationalist regimes that peddle "positive" liberty.

What their ideologies share is the monist ideal. Since the ultimate source of this error is Socrates, Berlin in effect challenges the mainstream of western thought.

Even so, it is difficult to conceive of Sir Isaiah in quite such radical terms. His lucid, polished discourse tempers his own theses

so that his prose becomes a mosaic of the widest possible interplay of ideas. Yet such discourse is itself a form of overview, so that it becomes unclear whether Berlin is after all a fox.

Or perhaps he's a giraffe: an Oxford luminary observing other creatures at play, but sometimes forgetful of the implications of his own loftiness. This species custom-evolved, it would sometimes seem, for the ivory tower.

More pertinently, there is the recurring suspicion, articulated by Berlin himself, that fulfillment need not depend on freedom at all. Regimes may not suit everyone, but they suit some. Thus Berlin's edifice begins to crumble even as it rises, fragmenting back into the open-minded pluralism where, happily, it originates.

A week in books

Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	

A week in books

In late 1990, the Tory party treasurer Alastair McAlpine visited the not-yet-ousted Margaret Thatcher "to tell her that Britain was beginning a serious recession". Just how did the art-dealing amateur politician and building-site heir know? Well, the weekly turnover from his "antiques and curiosity business" had dropped from £100,000 to a mere £2,000. Moreover, "I had also noticed how quiet London was". So much for econometric models and Treasury forecasters. Forget the dismal science: all a canny PM needs is some Mayfair Mr Pooter who can stroll down Burlington Arcade and spot that trade seems a little flat today.

Political memoirs, of course, exist to service our curiosity about another kind of antique. Over the past few days, gleeful pundits have pored over the extracts from Lord McAlpine's effort, *Once a Jolly Beggar* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £20), in which the loyal Thatcherite pursues his grim vendetta against foes such as Norman Lamont, John Gummer and the Premier himself – who used, he writes, to skulk invisibly around Chequers in Good Queen Margaret's reign "pretending to be a pair of curtains". Having now read the entire volume, I can report that three-quarters of it boasts all the thrill of watching cement dry. Most of the

book consists of leisure anecdotes from the building and painting trades, prefaced by a delicate childhood that splices elements from Betjeman and Waugh. Fancy a riveting tale of the great day when the firm of McAlpine shifted "Over 2,000 cubic yards of muck" on the Barbican site? Alastair's your man. "Being a builder can become immensely boring," he admits.

Even the missiles fired at Major's spineless "Cabinet of Chums" don't drop from a clear blue sky. It was a *New Statesman* interview in 1995 that first revealed McAlpine's hopes to see the Tories suffer "a good scrub with a hard brush". Compared to that image, his book's expectations of "a considerable defeat" sound a bit tame.

Yet, in other moods, McAlpine has written about political intrigue with a shrewd ferocity. His modernised pastiche of Machiavelli, *The Servant*, dripped with a ruthless cunning that Old Niccolo himself might have admired. Alas, he's now gone down with the English memoir malaise: name those names (well, the dead ones at least); settle old scores; and then bore the reader right with a tour around your cultural hinterland – in his case, the Australian Outback.

Strangely, for a resident of Italy, McAlpine has forfeited the fine Latin virtue of succinct abstraction in favour of the Anglo-Saxon taste for tedious yarns about the chaps he used to know. A world-class cynic has declined into the usual whingeing raconteur. That seems a shame – although I'd still like to know what happened after Eartha Kitt "elected to demonstrate gymnastics on the kitchen table".

Boyd Tonkin

The Politics of Hope
by Jonathan Sacks, Cape, £15.99

The temptation for clerics to add their two bits-worth in the political arena has a long, rarely happy history. Nothing daunted, the Orthodox Chief Rabbi has felt compelled to offer his diagnosis of the breakdown of contemporary society and the failure of Western liberal democracy. His book, he modestly tells us in its Preface, is "unique", and to be compared in its intent with Rousseau's *The Social Contract*.

Before considering whether Dr Sacks succeeds, it is worth asking what drove such a talented man to a project far removed from his usual sphere of concern. Two answers suggest themselves, neither particularly flattering.

The first is that the chief rabbi has a Vicar of Bray propensity for attaching himself to whichever political doctrine is modish. In the early Eighties he was a robust Thatcherite; come the caring Nineties, he was converted to the politics of compassion; nowadays, he is the very epitome of non-ideological New Labour, espousing the latest fad of "Community".

The second answer is about the prophet being without honour in his own community. The more his authority weakens within Anglo-Jewry, the more Dr Sacks is admired outside, especially by those

godless Fleet Street hacks who love to build up the bright Jewish boy with his Cambridge Double First at the expense of the hapless Archbishop of Canterbury. So why not offer your prescription for moral rejuvenation to a respectfully attentive non-Jewish audience?

The Politics of Hope is, appropriately, something of a curate's egg of a book. For a start, it is much too loud for its thesis, more an extended series of sermons than a developed argument, and like most sermons, it could easily be cut in half; but Dr Sacks is in love with words.

They pour from him in torrents, repetitive, reiterated, regurgitated. Presumably, his editor was too much in awe to staunch the flow.

Also, like most sermons, it relies more on impressionistic generalisations than hard statistics. Time and again we are invited to view a Hogarthian landscape of muggings, drugs, dysfunctional families, divorce, depressive illness, suicide, abortion, illegitimacy and failing educational standards.

There is something rotten in the state.

A brush with the intrepid fox

Justin Wintle hails the thinker who taught that disunity is strength

The Proper Study of Mankind: an anthology of essays
by Isaiah Berlin, Chatto, £25

Sir Isaiah Berlin was an influence before I knew anything about him. At public school I was fortunate to be taught history by a Balliol man. "Right, you lot," he began one morning, "today you're going toimbibe Karl Marx."

Cue sharp intake of breath by twenty-odd privileged prats. For most of us, Harold Wilson was anathema enough. Marx meant the USSR which meant the Cuban missile crisis which meant having come within a hair's breath of extinction at the hands of rabid ideologues. Had Mr Cozzens finally flipped?

But the lesson was no attempt at indoctrination. Rather we were introduced to Marx in the context of his times: an indomitable bookworm who offered fresh solutions to problems that had taxed Europe's finest minds. We were reminded of the central preoccupations of the Enlightenment, and given a purchase on Hegelian metaphysics. History was never the same again.

Cozzens knew his Isaiah Berlin. When later I read Berlin's monograph, I found it strangely familiar – and profoundly impressive. Published in 1939, *Karl Marx* is still in print (Fontana) and still the best introduction to its subject. Berlin may not especially like Marxian thought, but at the critical moments his exposition allows Marx to stand, even shine, in his own light.

This is typical of Berlin. His concern is nearly always with larger moral issues, but he never succumbs to indignation. Instead he labours diligently and eloquently at the rockface of other men's thought. *The Proper Study of Mankind* is testimony to these qualities, even though, as a sampler of Berlin, it fails to exhibit his full range. Henry Hardy and Roger Hausherr, editors of these 17 items, have a mission: to demonstrate that Berlin qualifies as a major thinker in his own right, that his work, which has saluted forth as essays and lectures, can enable such a subjective affair.

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A week in books

Prophet and loss account

David J Goldberg heckles the Chief Rabbi's suburban sermon

godless Fleet Street hacks who love to build up the bright Jewish boy with his Cambridge Double First at the expense of the hapless Archbishop of Canterbury.

What caused it? It was the Enlightenment's fault, for failing to distinguish between liberalism and libertarianism.

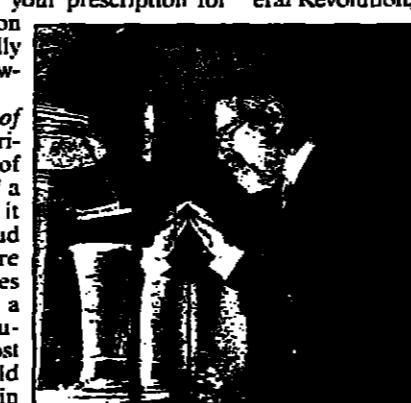
The book's central chapters, on the Liberal Revolution, the birth of the Individual, and Moral Language, are very good indeed. Dr Sacks writes with succinct clarity and insight about the ideas of Locke, Hume and Hobbes. He is less fair on Kant and dismissive about A.J. Ayer's logical positivism or Sartre's existentialism, but understandably so, given that for him the notion of individual autonomy, overriding traditional morality and leading to relative

and to which all broadly subscribed, "poor and rich alike, miners, labourers, politicians...fellows of Oxbridge colleges and children in the village school." These "mediating structures" need to be revived. They promote three qualities which are mentioned time and time again: "civility", "gentility" and "graciousness". All very well, but let us not forget that, like Mr Major's nostalgia for warm beer and village cricket, such a rosy idealisation was predicated on strict hierarchy and class inequality.

The primacy of marriage, family and education must also be re-asserted. Dr Sacks writes movingly of family life, a testament to the warmth of his own.

Essentially, though, his is a dream of cosy suburban domesticity, the aspirations of Jewish Finchley made manifest. He is particularly fond of using Regent's Park, with its elegant terraces, neatly laid-out gardens and public and private spaces, as a metaphor for the well-ordered civil society. He concedes that it might sound "middle-class, middle-aged and prosaic", but family and community are at the heart of his blueprint for the new social equation.

It was Kierkegaard who dubbed Isaac "the bourgeois patriarch", in contrast to his father Abraham, who had been a "knight of faith". On the evidence of this book, Dr Sacks is the bourgeois prophet of hope for our times, the religious counterpart – ponder it, dear reader – to Tony Blair.



Jonathan Sacks: 'Too loud'

Paperbacks

By Boyd Tonkin

Hitter's Willing Executioners by Daniel Jonah Goldhagen (Abacus, £9.99) On Monday, the young Harvard historian Daniel Goldhagen will accept the rarely-awarded Democracy Prize in Bonn for this, the most contentious reinterpretation of Nazi war crimes in 30 years. To sum up a complex charge-sheet, he claims that ordinary German civilians and soldiers – conditioned by their bred-in-the-bone antisemitism – not only knew plenty about the unfolding Holocaust. They also took an eager part in execution-squads that killed almost as many as the death camps. Goldhagen's critics (who include Jewish historians) have riposted that he demonises all Germans just as the Nazis demonised all Jews. But the evidence proves compelling, and the passion of his argument flares off the page.

The House Guest by Barbara Anderson (Vintage, £6.99) Anderson's earlier novels and stories brought to mind a Kiwi Alan Bennett – pawky, sidelong glances at suburban New Zealand life with a slicing wit that cut through to the oddity under the chintz and tea-sets. *The House Guest* stages a more elaborate plot, with curious echoes of Henry James. A researcher arrives in NZ on the trail of a mysterious US women writer who settled there in silence. The unveiling of Alice O'Leary's secrets runs in parallel with discoveries about Robin, the scholar-sleuth. It sounds a standard plot – except that the fine comic detail of Anderson's writing lifts every paragraph. Alice, we learn, had "a quickness" about her – and so, in spades, does Anderson.

The Debt to Pleasure by John Lanchester (Picador, £5.99) Sometimes reviewing is a lonely trade. My brightest colleagues garlanded this debut novel, and its riddling récit by a francophile foodie psychopath, with every superlative that the OED (or even Larousse) could supply. As for moi, I ploughed wearily through a frigid unreliable-narrator exercise in the late-Nabokov manner, not much cheered by the fact that we never trust the crashing snob and bore (and killer) at its heart. I admired

the savoury prose; I relished the polyglot kitchen argot; I salivated at cue at the baroque recipes that nasty Tarquin Winot offers us. But when reviewers hauled in Dickens (Dickens!) as a comparison, I wondered just what kind of literary planet they (or I) inhabited.

Love's Work by Gillian Rose (Vintage, £5.99) How many books of the 1990s will still be read in half a century? If there's any justice in this world (and Gillian Rose's life and thought powerfully suggest the opposite), this one will be among them. A bold and original philosopher (who held a chair at Warwick University), Rose wrestled with the conflicts between her Jewish heritage, her Protestant cast of mind and the corrosive scepticism of so much modern thought. She died of ovarian cancer in December 1995. Not long before, she completed this brief (135 pages) but searing blend of memoir and essay. Its rapt accounts of sexual passion, religious faith, intellectual work – and life-threatening sickness – also manage many flashes of wry comedy and some striking character-sketches, from her enigmatic lover "Father Dr Patrick Gorman" to her old chum Camille Paglia. This is a book one yearns to know (in every sense) by heart.

Faith Fox by Jane Gardam (Abacus, £6.99) There has always been a blackly comic streak buried in Jane Gardam's novels and here it finds full and exuberant expression. *Faith Fox* is the Surrey-born infant daughter of Holi who died in childbirth. Abandoned by her grieving family, she is driven north to spend the first few months of her life with her eccentric uncle Jack, his mad wife, Jocasta, and assorted hangers-on (including a set of enraged Tibetan refugees and a housekeeper who can neither cook nor clean) in their religious retreat on the Northumberland Moors. On one level, Gardam's tale is a simple story of the great North/South divide – the geographical split that shuts off one end of Britain from the other, but it is also a story about love and redemption, sex and death recounted in dazzling style.



Images from 'Exiles and Emigrés: the flight of European artists from Hitler' by Stéphane Barron (Abrams, £55). Clockwise from left: two Yamawaki, 'The Blow against the Bauhaus'; Otto Klemperer with his children in 1935; Andreas Feininger's 'The Cities Service Building, Fire Escapes and the El'; and John Heartfield's 'And Yet it Moves'

The sinking ship of state

Alberto Manguel enjoys a stationary odyssey on the Brooklyn waterfront

The Ordinary Seaman is a contemporary odyssey – the chronicle of a voyage that will not take place, an adventure story that is all beginning and no end, an urban sea-yarn with no sea. The source, according to Goldman himself, was an item in the New York press, reporting that 17 Latin-American sailors, abandoned by their ship's authorities, had lived for months in a rat-infested, unheated hull on the Brooklyn waterfront. Goldman interviewed the sailors: one gave him his own 12-page account of the ordeal, urging Goldman to make use of it. Ten years later, Goldman did.

The result is a brilliantly imagined recreation of their suffering, set against a social atlas of contemporary America: Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, Mexico, Cuba, Argentina and, of course, the United States. The sailors' stories unfold in backward glances and forward flashes so that every present moment wavers

The Ordinary Seaman
by Francisco Goldman, Faber, £15.99

between regret and foreboding, brutal glimpses of the Sandinista war and dreams of a better life.

One sailor, Bernardo, dies of a gangrenous leg; another, Esteban, escapes into the city where fate rewards him with a haircut and the love of a Mexican manicurist; others drag out their existences through theft, through erotic fantasies or by drugging themselves with kerosene fumes. No one can help these "ordinary seamen" move on but themselves: neither the Ship Visitor who takes professional pity on the stranded men, nor the Reverend Kathy Roundtree who has assumed the role of the "Port of New Jersey and New York's Father Brown", and certainly not the god-like and ambiguous Captain who professes more knowledge of herbal medicine than seafaring craft.

Nor will anyone avenge them. In our time, the guilty go unpunished. "Nowadays any scum can hide from God," says the Reverend Roundtree. "All you need is, whatever, a flag of convenience, brass plate incorporation." In this Odyssey gods and mortals, kings and enchantresses, Cyclops and Penelopes are small, inglorious, everyday creatures, neither less horrible nor less fate-bound than their illustrious predecessors.

The most striking aspect of *The Ordinary Seaman* is its language, a baroque "Espagnol" coming into its own: "Ay no, muchacha, it hurts. It hurts just to remember that, just my hand touching your warm skin through a dress. A tightening in my throat, va, puer." Anyone who has spent any time in New York, Los Angeles or Miami will recognise (with either vivas of approval or shit, marks of regret) the rich, rhythmic prose of those Pan-American streets, which Goldman so deftly handles.

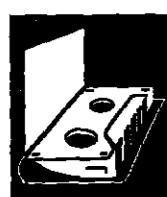
Memories, daydreams, visions of sex and death, descriptions of war, moments of half-magic and nightmares – all build up the waiting-time, till the empty hull of the skeleton ship is true in Spanish, half in English.

It is true that other writers have made use of the doomed journey, notably B Traven in *The Death Ship*, Katherine Anne Porter in *Ship of Fools* and Julio Cortázar in *The Prizes*, but in these novels both the vessel and its voyagers seem too obviously and dogmatically symbolic. Goldman's ship is less imposing, its adventures (or lack of adventures) less literary. Precisely for that reason, the novel suggests other readings besides the mere tale of a drawn-out waiting. One is mythical: the story of how a society comes into being. Abandoned by the bosses who summoned them, transformed into outsiders, given neither permission to enter the city nor a purpose to leave it, the sailors are forced to form their

own community, dream up their own history, create their own leaders and, of course, their own outsiders in a Latino version of the settlement of America.

Another reading is political. *The Ordinary Seaman* can be read as a parable about the inability of the most powerful city in the most powerful country in the Western world to give mission and a purpose to those washed up on her shores, to find for them a place in its national ambitions, to fulfil the promise engraved on its Statue of Liberty. In fact, it is almost without irony that the statue of the torch-bearing Lady becomes, for the sailors, an emblem of their own immobility in a forecast made by Bernardo, the one sailor who must in the end, like all prophets, die: "When that statue walks, chavalos, this ship will sail". The ship's ultimate fate (which mustn't be revealed) neither confirms nor denies Bernardo's prophecy.

Audiobooks



Independent choice: women and crime

By Mary Scott

Stewart Park is everybody's worst nightmare. His face is like a long, tapering wedge of Cheddar cheese. A single look sends mothers in the local playground scurrying to the police, turns a prostitute's eyes pale with fear. There will be people not sleeping well tonight because of him.

Stewart is also the narrator of *Freezing* by Penelope Evans (Black Swan, £6.99) and the most unusual and endearing fictional sleuth I have ever encountered. His world is that of London's underworld. He lives at home with his ancient, complaining Dad, who takes things to pieces to see how they work and who is gripped, serially, by mad enthusiasms – horse racing, fishing.

By day, Stewart is a photographer in a morgue. By night he fights, courtesy of his computer, alongside Dustraiser – who will save the Ice Maiden.

Enter the real Ice Maiden, the corpse of a young girl pulled from the Thames. What follows is an extraordinary odyssey. Innocent, simple, ugly Stewart blunders along the trail of the anonymous dead girl and the pre-programmed Dustraiser develops a mind of its own.

Minor characters (and real treats) along the way include Lady, the pitbull with a heart of gold, Wayne Dodds, the chilling policeman with whom Stewart went to school, and Angie, the fat nurse who makes him realise that perhaps he isn't everyone's worst nightmare after all. But the best thing about this novel is the way it enters Stewart's mind and portrays the sophisticated world to which we are all accustomed as incomprehensible. It's utterly gripping, utterly convincing – a stunning achievement.

Jenifer Shute's *Sex Crimes* (Secker & Warburg, £9.99) has an intriguing narrator too. She's Christine Chandler, a 38-year-old, successful lawyer who

admits, from the start, she was responsible for a violent attack on her 26-year-old lover, Scott. The novel takes the form of a deposition to her lawyer.

Snippets from the press – depicting her as the Boston Fury – intersperse her own, seemingly rational account. Scott pursued her, she insists, not the other way about. But gradually, as she continues – I defy you not to keep turning the pages – she reveals her madness. The achievement here is to admit us into the mind of a monster.

As in *Freezing*, Lesley Grant-Adamson's *The Girl in the Case* (Hodder & Stoughton, £16.99) has a dénouement that involves a dog. But Jay, the badly-behaved golden retriever belonging to the protagonist Mandy, is an unlikely hero.

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PENELAPE EVANS

Freezing



Pick of the week
Freezing by Penelope Evans

on wisecracking? This is also a lesbian romance with the sexual action kept comfortably – for heterosexuals like me – off the page. Oh. And Jane cooks a mean dinner: try her recipe for chicken on page 51.

There are no dogs in *Hot Poppies* by Reggie Nadelson (Faber, £14.99). The poppies in question are mutant opium ones that have been irradiated by fallout from a secret Chernobyl-style explosion in China. Ingest them and you bleed whodunit which takes PI Artie Cohen to Hong Kong on the brink of its succession to China.

Artie's girlfriend wants to adopt a Chinese baby. Back in New York, illegal immigrants toil in sweatshops, in which "Fire Exit" is scrawled in red on a blank, whitewashed, brick wall. The inevitable happens: the plate goes up in flames. Dante-esque scenes follow: doomed women cling, seven stories up, to a fire escape, then plunge to their death. Against all odds, Artie brings a Chinese baby back to his girlfriend – but not the baby she was expecting.

A place in the sun

Paula Burnett on a new Caribbean classic

Texaco by Patrick Chamoiseau, translated by Rosemary Réjouis and Val Vinokurov, Granta, £15.99

Texaco won the Prix Goncourt (the French Booker) in 1992 and has already sold half a million copies in France. It has been translated into Japanese and Korean as well as nine other European languages. At long last, it has come out in English. What have we been missing?

For Milan Kundera, Chamoiseau "takes liberties with French which not one of his French contemporaries could even imagine taking". This big novel is volubly oral, it flows rapid, poetic and witty. It proceeds "by whirling paths... like driftwood riding the tide of memories".

Swampy would enjoy *Texaco*. So should the growing army of citizens who have stood up against business or officialdom on behalf of their communities. Texaco is a shantytown built on the oil company's disused depot between sea and mountain, between the country and the city of Fort de France, capital of the Caribbean island of Martinique, Chamoiseau's home.

Its residents are "between" in another sense – creoles, people emerging from once separate cultural and racial histories. They defend their threatened community with everything from pitched battles to politics – including such tactics as sharing out the children so that each house has "big-

eyed blackids" to face down the officials. And they win.

The town planner, felled by a stone in the opening pages, is transformed by the old woman who mends his head and tells him the epic story of how the people came to be there, and why it matters that they remain, building not only homes but their sense of who they are.

Memory is their history, the map of their alleys like the map of the veins in their hands. Wipe that out in improvement projects, suggests Chamoiseau, and you destroy something irreplaceable.

Like V.S. Naipaul's Caribbean classic *A House for Mr Biswas*, the book tells of the heroic struggle of the dispossessed to secure a place – but it is very different, with its rich tumble of stories spilling out just as the shanties spill down the hill.

The old woman's voice that predominates chronicles the epochs by the building materials used by the poor: straw, crate-wood, asbestos, finally concrete. This is Chamoiseau's tribute to a lineage of unsung heroes with an "ancestral custom of survival", as in Derek Walcott's poetic epic *Omeros*. The final section tells of the author's gathering of oral histories from real people; of his sense of recording a vanishing past.

In 1989 Chamoiseau co-authored the manifesto *In Praise of Creoliness*. Texaco is Creole poetics in action. It contrasts "an occidental

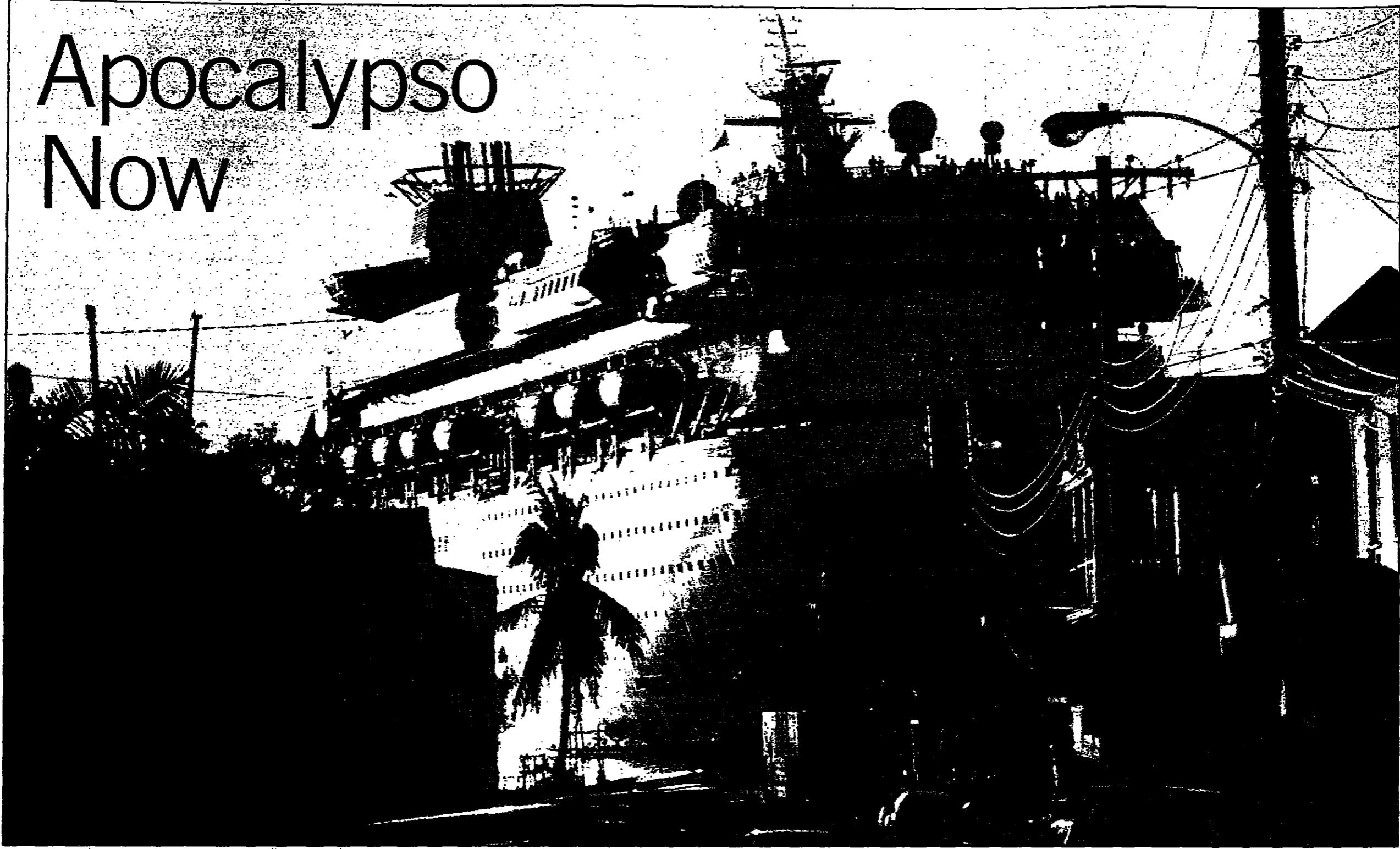
easy, Réjouis and Vinokurov have no Caribbean English, which has produced some anomalies. Why use the French spelling "mabi" when "mauby" is a familiar term in the anglophone Caribbean? The insistence on using "hutch" for "cases" (the shantytown dwellings) grates, as hutch conveys none of the pathos of makeshift home-making. But the standard English tone is accurate enough: most of the French is closer to standard than the Caribbean idiom developed by some writers in English.

This exhilarating book is now available to a huge new readership. If only a fluent Creole and Caribbean English speaker had translated it – St Lucian, for instance. Derek Walcott's language, which draws on both traditions, shows what could have been done.

travel & outdoors

Praise be: churches from
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Morse in Oxford 15
The spring garden 19

Apocalypso Now



PHOTOGRAPH: J DU SORDET/COLORIFIC

Invasion of the culture snatchers: armadas of cruise ships ply the Caribbean disgorging thousands of tourists on streamlined day-trips

The craft steals through the calm of a Caribbean night as silently as a 4 x 100 watt loud-speaker system playing dodgy and distorted salsa allows. Fortunately, the vessel that we dozen Brits had boarded in the Dominican Republic is not the one that is to take us cruising for a week. In maritime parlance, it could most kindly be described as a tender, a launch bearing us across to the twinkling triangle on the horizon – appropriately named MV *Horizon*.

There is something endearingly British about the way that, each week, a boatload of holidaymakers is despatched upon the high seas to join a Caribbean cruise that is already in progress.

Here's the plan, Celebrity Cruises is a big

Simon Calder joins a floating hotel for a cruise through the Caribbean

Everyone scrambles on to the more serious ship, each clutching a duty-free bag. Yet our cheap booze is pure contraband, breaking the ship rule that liquor may not be brought aboard. Thus the British stamp their national identity on an otherwise all-American mission.

You meet the rep, Julie – quite the jolliest person in the entire western hemisphere, let alone the Eastern Caribbean.

You meet your cabin steward, whose beaming visage contains only the barest glimpse of disapproval at (a) the duty-free bag and (b) a slightly grubby bicycle.

You meet your room, a bottom-of-the-

range-but-perfectly-serviceable "standard inside cabin" that is to perambulate you gently around the Caribbean for a week. And then you become vaguely aware that the ship has started to move, in the general direction of suspended reality.

There are a hundred reasons why cruising is bad for the world, such as the distress and disruption caused to a small island by offloading 1,000 people in the morning for a day-long frenzy of concentrated tourism, only for them to disappear at dusk leaving nothing but a few dollars and a few more dents in a fragile community.

But within five minutes of phoning room service and a fresh salad appearing for supper, and five seconds after illicitly sipping the finest Australian shiraz that Gatwick can sell, you drown out the anxieties by submerging yourself in a foaming bath of excess.

For the first 36 hours of the British ver-

sion of the cruise, there are none of those troublesome islands to visit. So you idly busy yourself about the ship, establishing routines to support you comfortably for a week. Foraging for sustenance is not among the challenges you face. From before dawn to beyond midnight you could happily pig out in half a dozen venues, then ring cabin service for extra supplies during the small hours. This will cost you not a single penny – or, in the on-board currency, a cent. *Horizon* most closely resembles an additional US state, drifting with our undue purpose of Florida.

Seating for formal dining seems to be allocated by nationality, with British diners kept away from US citizens. So the ideal place to meet Americans is in the men's sauna (though possibly not if you are female). Unless you encounter a strangely reticent specimen, with five sweaty

minutes of settling on the painfully piping-hot timbers, you will find out where he is from, how many times he has been divorced, how much he earns – and how much he paid for the cruise.

The one certainty in this torrent of information is that he will have paid more than you. Thomson has negotiated some enticingly low prices for a five-star cruise. For the peak of high-season

departures, I paid £950. If you were to book the same trip from the Celebrity Cruises' British office, you could pay about half as much again. One benefit of booking direct, though, is that it takes care of the difference between American passengers and the British over tipping. For "difference" read "stinginess".

Celebrity, like many other cruise lines, prescribes the exact gratuity that each passenger should give to various crew members. The idea is to raise wages to a decent level. But the practice finds little favour among some Thomson passengers. As *Horizon* sailed south of the Puerto Rican Trench, discontent was marked by an unseemly mutiny: the tip envelopes of some Brits were a good few notes short of the appropriate wad of dollars. For direc-tions Celebrity avoids financial embarrassment by issuing tipping vouchers in advance – removing the voluntary element from the equation.

Whatever the staff in the Starlight Restaurant earn from the British, they deserve double for unflagging good humour and service. The set piece each day is an elaborate dinner, such as is served in the kind of restaurant that would not normally have to cater for people like me. Another aspect that takes

some getting used to is that you share a table with the same diners every night. You have seven opportunities to become accustomed to the idea, by which time the *petits fours* have multiplied to *grands vins* and you have not a snowflake-in-a-sauna's chance of sweating off the excess weight.

Luckily I found the Knot family from Yorkshire unstintingly entertaining, though they might not say the same about me. Five stars for this family of five, then, but none for the official on-board entertainment: a dreary procession of sub-Broadway pastiches that would never have made it to Butlin's at Bognor Regis.

But unlike Butlin's, you can quickly escape to the deck to watch a full moon drench quicksilver upon a thousand islets in the mirrored sea.

Ah yes, that's where we are – the Caribbean, threading through a necklace of islands which enjoy the possibly dubious and certainly temporary benefit of our company. Names skip enticingly from the pages of the brochure as if you were flicking through a stamp album: Antigua, Barbados, Martinique, Puerto Rico, St Thomas. And some people's view of the ports-of-call is as two-dimensional as a postage stamp. As far as the ship's excursions desk is concerned,

the perfect passenger is expected to sign up for a minibus trip around the island, eat a mass-produced lunch and end up at a mass-produced souvenir shop.

Yet you can easily evade expectations.

The charter airline will accept a bicycle for free. It stows neatly into your cabin without impeding the procession of room

service deliveries. You are now equipped for rapid transport around the ship (there may be a by-law prohibiting on-board cycling but I swear I never saw it). And with two wheels you are able to glide effortlessly around each island, taking stock of the scenery and providing modest entertainment for the local people – especially when hauling yourself wheezily up the little-known Barbados Alps. Take the cycle clips off on Martinique, the insufferably joie French island with Himalayan tendencies; next day, pedal thankfully across Antigua's ample acres.

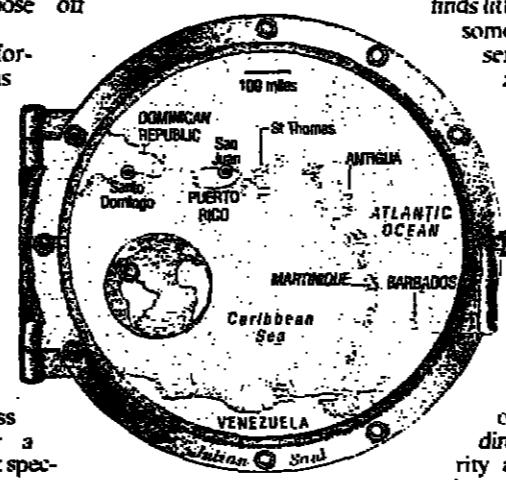
St Thomas is the saddest call: handsome Danish heritage swamped by a tidal wave of tawdry daytrippers. Conserve your calories for Puerto Rico, big and pretty enough to absorb its role as the Clapham Junction of the Caribbean cruise.

At the boisterous harbour in San Juan, you bid farewell to your sauna-soulmates – who miss out on the best treat of the whole voyage.

While Chuck and Hank fly back to the Midwestern snows, the British enjoy the longest stay of all: 16 hours in one of the minor gems of the Spanish Caribbean, inhabited by a raucously friendly bunch of people

with apparently no business more pressing than to exchange beers with British boaters.

The final night leaves you in an unfamiliar position of seniority. To the new arrivals who boarded in Puerto Rico, you are an old shiphand, demonstrating your grasp of the ropes (and the sauna) to the newcomers. How curious your departure must appear to them the next morning when *Horizon* moors off the Dominican coast. A mobile juke box puffs across from the mainland to pick up that funny lot, still defiantly clutching their duty-free bags.



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Praise be to Air Miles

Matthew Hoffman gives a guided tour through the heavenly vaults of Venice

In late 1993, I realised that I could collect Air Miles simply by paying bills with my bank-issued credit card. But where should I fly to, when I finally succeeded in garnering thousands of miles (which, at £20 per mile, would obviously be some time off)? Three years later, on a cold, misty winter afternoon, I peered through the unwashed glass of a *motocafé* speeding through the Venetian lagoon. The campaniles of Venice were spread out to starboard like the skyscrapers of New York as seen from the New Jersey turnpike. It was mid-week, rather than a weekend, and I had booked three nights at an inexpensive pension just off the Grand Canal near the Accademia art gallery.

There was a problem, though. What can you do in such a treasure house as Venice in only three days? Or, more precisely, what can you do without? For me, the answer was determined by a summer holiday spent in nearby Vicenza in 1995. On that occasion, I had spent about 10 days touring the Veneto (Venice's historic mainland dependency) seeing as much as I could of the buildings of Andrea Palladio, the 16th-century Vicentine architect. Now I decided to confine my sightseeing on this short trip to Palladio's two complete churches, San Giorgio Maggiore and Il Redentore – or at least to make them my first priority.

Of course, I had seen the exteriors of these churches before. Who hasn't? Anyone who has ever stood in front of the Doge's Palace, at the heart of tourist Venice, and looked across the lagoon, has noticed the classical portico of San Giorgio floating there, anchored to its little



island. And, turning to the right, along the waterfront of the Giudecca, with a little more discernment you may have picked out, from the line of smaller buildings, the compact, domed profile of Palladio's votive church dedicated to the Redeemer, in thanksgiving for deliverance from the plague of 1575-6. On this trip, however, I wouldn't merely gaze from afar.

Within an hour of getting to town, I had walked across the Dorsoduro from my hotel to the Zattere water-bus stop and caught a number 82 *vaporetto* to Redentore on the Giudecca; but it was already late afternoon, with sunset fast approaching. The church is lit by natural light and it was, to be frank, gloomy inside. It had a chaste magnificence but none of the delight of, say, one of Veronese's frescoed rooms in Palladio's Villa Maser. Of course, it was dedicated to a serious purpose; it's not a

noblemen's pleasure palace. But somehow I had not allowed for the difference. It was too dark to stay long, and I left for dinner a little disappointed.

The next day, after a morning

spent among the glories of Venetian arts and crafts in the Museo Correr, I set out with trepidation for San Giorgio Maggiore.

This time, I was delighted. Il Redentore may be made for spiritual reflection; San Giorgio is designed for show. The wealthy Benedictine monks must have wanted a church to rival the newly rebuilt St Peter's in Rome, for what they commissioned from Palladio is a magnificent showcase of High Renaissance

Palladio's compressions of pilasters and capitals, seemingly overlapping as they turn corners, are surely music frozen in space!

grandeur. This is more Roman empire than Roman Catholic. Take the deep, U-shaped choir behind the chancel. Above the carved stalls there is an alternating series of windows and niches

something out of a Roman temple. Back in the main nave, through the aisles, into the apsidal arms of the transepts and under the high dome, there is a thrilling sense of spatial ordering. Architectural historians write of the rhythmic use of the intervals between bays, and repetitions and variations of motifs, as though the members of a

chorus sang of the analogy had always seemed strained to me, but Palladio's compressions of pilasters and capitals, seemingly overlapping as they turn the corners from the nave to the crossing to the chancel, are surely music frozen in space.

The next day in Venice I

devoted to other matters, but on my last morning I set out early – more from a sense of duty than desire – to take a last look at Il Redentore. The Giudecca Canal was shrouded in fog and the church loomed up before me as I approached it from the *vaporetto* stop. I plunged on inside and found myself alone but for a cleaning woman. The contrast in upkeep with San Giorgio was immediately apparent. The latter church is now looked after by the well-endowed Cini Foundation, and the stucco of the walls is smooth, the paintwork fresh. Il Redentore has peeling plaster and discoloured surfaces: the Franciscans seem to have remained as poor as their founder.

All Palladio's buildings pay great attention to tonal values: they look ill when shabby, although they bounce back to life with a little repair work.

View over the waterfront of the Giudecca to the profile of Palladio's Redentore
Top: the play of light and space in Il Redentore and San Giorgio Maggiore
MAIN PHOTOGRAPH: JONATHAN ANSTEE
TOP PHOTOGRAPHS: MATTHEW HOFFMAN

Still, the mild, diffuse early morning light was a great improvement on that of late afternoon, and as I lingered in the church, the fog burnt off and shafts of rosy light filtered through the plain glass thermal windows. I took a few photographs, and then decided to sketch a couple of bays in the nave. That made all the difference. A few scratchy pencil marks revealed to me the arrangement of small and large classical orders, and the subtle interplay that linked them. Il Redentore reveals its secrets much more reluctantly than San Giorgio, but it is worth the wait and the effort to penetrate them.

Much of the church is cordoned off and only the nave is open to the public. But the cleaner left one of the side-chapel gates open, and from the change in angle of vision there my understanding of the building gained a new dimension. A priest then emerged, and, with his permission, I was able to explore more of the church: to walk under the dome, into the apses, around the altar.

In the book *I Quattro Libri dell'Architettura*, Palladio echoes his ancient Roman predecessor Vitruvius in pointing out that each building must be appropriate to its purpose. "Temples in particular", Palladio tells us, "ought to be so made, that they might have so much beauty, that nothing more beautiful could be imagined, and so disposed in each of their parts, that those who enter there, may be astonished, and remain in a kind of ecstasy in admiring their grace and beauty."

I can attest that this ecstasy is available, in very different forms, to those who will take the time to experience it, at both of Palladio's great Venetian churches.

Chaucer revisited: the priest's tale

This is the year for travelling religiously, writes the Reverend Katharine Ruwens

met cathedrals early in life, and at a young age began to get the hang of them and to grow to love them. The secret is to be brought up in Salisbury, a city dominated by the 404ft spire of its magnificent cathedral. Inside the vast nave we learnt childhood accommodation of adult habits on a grand scale: services observed at waist height, and everything being loud and out of reach – the music, the marble pillars, the prayers.

Fortune has thus been kind in providing me with an acute sense of belonging to England's heroic religious heritage. This year, happily, tourists get a chance to share in it, as a result of a coincidence of anniversaries.

It is good thing that St Augustine chose not to mess with Pope Gregory the Great. He and his monks had travelled as far as Gaul. Weary, they wanted to be released from their obligation and return to Rome; after having been "encouraged by letters from Gregory", Augustine landed in Kent in 597 to begin reconversion to Christianity. (The Romans first brought Christianity to England, but under the Anglo-Saxons the country had reverted to paganism.) Hence 1997 is a year of celebration, marking the 1,400th anniversary of his arrival, and an equal commemoration of the death of St Columba on Iona. St Columba didn't have a particularly easy journey of it,



The ruin route: Whitby Abbey

either, on his route from Ireland, what with recalcitrant monks and shipwrecks.

English Heritage has designated this year a time of celebration of the country's Christian traditions. We are invited to follow in the footsteps of the early Christian fathers – along the way meeting some mothers too, among them Queen Bertha and St Hilda. Special events around the country include an exhibition of medieval imagery at the Bar Convent Museum in York, and tile-making demonstrations at Cleeve Abbey in Somerset. The highlight of English Heritage's year is on 25 May, when the Archbishop of Canterbury

opens a film museum amid the remains of St Augustine's Abbey in Canterbury.

Over the next six months, the holiest of English cities will host exhibitions of paintings and photographs and a display of relics of St Thomas Becket, including the Becket chasse, or casket, acquired by the V&A last year. The Dean of Canterbury is not anticipating miracles. He is, however, expecting much toing and froing, and even more visitors than usual, when the pilgrimage season gets underway.

As Chaucer's pilgrims got the urge to go on pilgrimage in April, "when the sweet showers fall", so, too, will the chapter and choir from Canterbury Cathedral set off for Rome in April. There they will sing, and share in worship at holy places – San Gregorio al Celio and Santa Maria Maggiore. They are not the staff-and-cockleshell variety of pilgrim, as they are travelling there by the fastest means available, on a scheduled flight from Heathrow.

Shortly afterwards, a group of 50 will reverse the itinerary, and a handful of walkers will be among them when they start from Rome on 18 May. They are travelling through Italy and France and will be joined by a further 400 pilgrims when they reach Canterbury Cathedral on 26 May, the feast day of St Augustine.

The massed ranks of pilgrims then take four routes to Derry in Ireland, to arrive on 9 June. The journey's end is the city

founded by St Columba, today seen as a place of reconciliation. The route will take the pilgrims through great cities and places of urban and industrial deprivations, as well as more conventional places of pilgrimage, such as Whitby Abbey (left) and Lindisfarne Priory. The pilgrimage is not seen as an exercise in nostalgia, but as a treading of the Christian faith through cities and suburbs where the main religion is not necessarily Christianity – such as Leicester, with its large Hindu and Muslim communities.

We live in days of high speed travel, and in many ways barely skim the surface of our world. In making 1997 a year of pilgrimage, Britain's Christians of the tour nations hope to make present generations more conscious of the faith and the way in which Christianity has formed us and our world.

The writer is priest at St John's in Waterloo, London.

Bar Convent, York (01904 643238): medieval imagery 7 April–7 September; Cleeve Abbey, Somerset (01984 640377 01823 272033); tile-making and storytelling, 20–26 September; Whitby Abbey (01947 603568), open 10am–6pm, 22 March to 31 October, 10am–4pm from 1 November; Lindisfarne Priory (01289 389200); access only at low tide, across causeway. English Heritage Souvenir Map 1997, available free by calling 071 973 3434.

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مكتبة من الأصل

Mexican nave

The spirit of the Mayans is alive and well in Chiapas. By Matthew Wells

The authorisation letter, purchased for the princely sum of 30 pence, left me in no doubt that I was about to see something unusual: "Warning. It is forbidden to take photos inside the church. It is also forbidden to take photos during any rituals, as well as of officials wearing ritual costumes. Those tourists who do not respect these rules will be punished."

I was in the heart of Mexico's Zapista rebel country, in a village called Chamula - a market-place and meeting-point for dozens of remote peasant settlements in the green and mountainous countryside. Everything there focuses on the simple, whitewashed church that lies at one end of the enormous square. But it's no oil painting on the outside. There are far grander Baroque colonial masterpieces, I reflected, in nearby San Cristóbal.

Yet, by late morning that day, fireworks fizzed aimlessly into the sky from behind the church, competing with the din of small brass bands working up a frenzy beneath. The whole village was electrically charged. The doorway of the church was guarded by several youths, wrapped in brilliant white animal skins and wearing impressive Panama hats. My entry credentials were carefully checked, and I passed through solid doors that have been providing sanctuary for 400 years.

The villagers here are largely descended from the Mayan Indians, and although the idols of saints and the incense that hung thick in the air were vintage Catholic, the baring of souls taking place all around predated the Spanish arrival. Family groups littered the hay-strewn floor, chanting in front of thousands of

small candles. A woman cradled her heavily pregnant daughter, seemingly in a trance, while a man lay face down under a wooden table - more likely drunk than tired. Many of the locals buy a powerful home-brewed spirit in the square outside, to be liberally drunk throughout their devotions. I noted that the greatest number of semi-recumbent bodies was around the altar rails, the quietest part of the building.

the nave, an entire village group lined up behind guitar players, and a small boy squeezed a soothing series of slow chords from a rickety accordion. There was no co-ordination to their singing and chanting. But, as if some secret sign has suddenly been made, they departed together, faces stained with emotion.

People prayed in a mixture of incantation, meditation and tears. I felt like an observer in an outpatients' department for injured souls. And, as in a busy hospital, there was little concern about the outward appearance of the church: the emphasis was on healing.

The glorious ruined temples of Palenque and Uxmal are far grander monuments to what the Mayan civilisation once was. Here, though, surrounded by the humbled descendants of the Mayans, you get an understanding of the fervour that caused such places to be created. You also comprehend the collective belief in the campaign for self-determination, which manifests itself in support for the Zapatistas in the face of repression and human rights abuses such as those reported this week from the sad state of Chiapas.



On the way to church, above. The simple, whitewashed church at Chamula, left, where souls are bared, Mayan style. A mother prays with her child, right

PHOTOGRAPHS TOP AND
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Windy days out for kids

National Mills Day There are about 400 mills across the country that are open to the public, a fact celebrated on 11 May, when our industrial heritage sets its sails for a day of activities, many geared especially for children. Some mills will offer free or reduced price entry for the day. The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (0171-377 1644) publishes *Mills Open*, which gives details of all mills known to be open to the public.

Wimbledon Windmill Museum, Windmill Road, Wimbledon Common (0181-947 2825) This was the site of many duels in the 18th and 19th centuries. The Common's unusual hollow post mill, built in 1817, forms the main attraction, along with a collection of milling equipment to show how the mill would have worked and models depicting the history of windmills. Most of the equipment is robust and child-proof and kids are encouraged to try their hand at the grinding process. Open Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays, April to October, 2pm-5pm. Adults £1, children and concessions 50p.

Coldharbour Mill, Uffculme, Cullompton, Devon EX15 3EE (01884 340960) If you don't know the difference between bobbins and a "Pollit and Wigzell drop-valve horizontal cross compound steam engine" this working wool mill and museum can provide answers. From lamb to pullover, the whole process is on display, with tours explaining the machines in action and the life of its 19th-century workers. Open April to October, 10.30am to 5pm daily. Adults £5, children £2.50, family £13.50.

Skidby Windmill, just south of Beverley on the A164, East Yorkshire (01482 884971) A working mill with milling on Sundays. Easter at Skidby on 30 March includes a painted-egg competition and free face-painting. The mill is holding a fund-raising fair on 23 March. Open weekends, 10am-4pm. Adults £1.50, children 50p, concessions 80p.

Delabole Wind Farm, Delabole, North Cornwall, PL33 9BZ (01840 213377) Ten wind turbines stationed here provide "green" power for 3,000 households. The visitor's centre explains how – and looks at – other renewable sources with help of working models. Call for opening times.

Museum of Welsh Life, St Fagans, Cardiff CF5 6XB (01222 569441). Wales used to have hundreds of corn mills, driven – as this one is – by water. Three floors of grinding and lifting machinery turn grain into feed under the miller's supervision. Open Easter to October, 10am to 6pm. Adults £5, children £3.75, concessions £3.75.

Tornish Mill, nine miles west of Kirkwall (A965), Orkney. Sympathetically converted to include a craft shop, visitor's centre and restaurant. Although no longer working it has retained most of the original machinery and waterwheel. Open from April, Mon to Sat, 9.30am to 6.30pm, Sunday 2.4.30pm.

Flour of a scientific heritage

Caroline Millar saw the sails go round at Green's Mill, Nottingham

Green's Mill stands picturesquely silhouetted against the white sky of early spring. Children scream and point excitedly to the vast sails gathering speed in a winter breeze. Inside, there is a noise like a vast treadle sewing-machine as the millstones grind impressively into action.

Yet the Mill is not just a nostalgic souvenir of our rural past. Situated in the heart of industrial Nottingham, it also tells the story of George Green, one of the greatest scientists of the 19th century.

This mathematician and miller inherited the mill from his father, who had built it overlooking the valley of the river Trent in 1807. George, a largely self-educated man, played his part in the business. He also pioneered the application of mathematics to natural phenomena such as electricity and magnetism. Although he was virtually unknown during his lifetime, his work is now used in all the physical sciences.

Kids may soon pass the section of the museum that deals with Green's life. What they will discover is a hands-on science section where Green's interests are illustrated by wave machines, echo tubes, and illusions such as the "ghostly hands". You can even get a rather lurid throwback to Sixties Op Art by looking through the prism towards the moving sails of the mill.

Outside, the sturdy brick buildings have a practical beauty. And, the nearest thing to heaven for the under-10s, an extra-long slide snakes its way down the hill.

The visitors

Caroline Millar, a freelance writer, went to Green's Mill with her son Thomas, seven, daughter Claire, four, and niece Emma Atamanuk, eight.

Caroline: We all felt quite awed by all those vast wheels turning in the mill. You can't help saying to yourself "how amazing, it really works," when you see the bags of flour at the end of it all.

It was quite an adventure to climb to the top and see Nottingham spread out in front of us. The stairs were very steep, though, and I wouldn't want to take a child under four up there.

I found the historical details fascinating. You realise how recent our urban landscapes are when you see a reminder of an older way of life still standing, like the mill.

Emma and Thomas preferred the hands-on science, and learned quite a lot from seeing Green's Mill in action. But I don't think the mill is ideal for younger children. At four, Claire got very



Not just a nostalgic souvenir of the rural past: Green's Mill tells a story of scientific achievement

bored, and verged on a temper tantrum when she couldn't buy a badge.

Emma: I liked it because it was interesting when you could see all the big wheels going round. You could see the sails going past the window, and I think the wind must be very strong to push heavy things like that. In the science part I liked the ball with all the pink lines that go to your hand – it looked like lightning striking my

hand. But the video in the museum was a bit boring.

I loved the big slide. It was more slippery when you went on your coat and put your feet in the air. Thomas looked funny when he was doing that.

Thomas: Actually, none of it was boring. I liked to see the big wheels turning. They were going round very quick and it must have been a hard wind. But the steps up to the top of the mill

were steep and when I had to go down I had to go backwards.

There was round thing and when you put your hand in, it was reflected like a ghostly hand. I kept trying to shake it but it kept moving away.

The slide was dead big. Emma thought I looked funny, but I don't.

Claire: I liked the playground and the windmill because it could go round. I liked the bit that the

water goes in [the wave machine]. But I cried because I wanted to buy something.

The deal

Green's Mill and Science Centre is at Windmill Lane, Sneinton, Nottingham NG2 4QB (0115 915 6878). Opening times: Wednesdays-Sunday (and Bank Holiday Mondays) 10am-5pm.

Entrances: Free – but visitors are urged to buy a bag of Green's Mill flour.

Access: Telephone for details of special disabled access (to the museum only, not the mill). Buggy-pushers may find the steps up to the museum a problem.

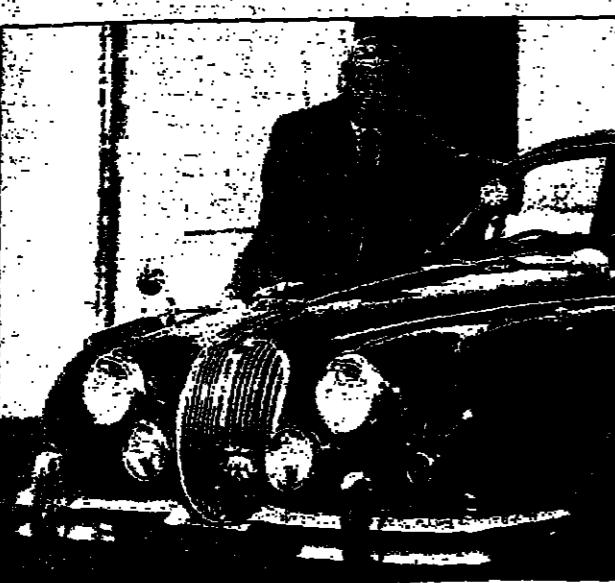
Toilets: Clean. There are toilets for the disabled.

Catering: There is a cafe, run by volunteers. On the day we went it wasn't open, and the nearest cafe was in the city centre.

Education: Lots. Ring the mill for details of sessions on bread-making, corn dollies and wind power.

The mystery appeal of the dreaming spires

On the trail of Inspector Morse: Rhiannon Batten investigates Oxford



Inspector Morse as played by John Thaw

Apparently one particular room in Oxford's Randolph Hotel is invariably booked up by Americans these days. The reason for the popularity of room 310 is that a certain occupant recently died in it. Fortunately for the visiting Americans, this was not to do with any health or safety problems the room might have had. The doomed lady

was not even alive, as such, in the first place. She was a figurement of Colia Dexter's jottings. As his fans will know, he is the writer behind the *Inspector Morse* programmes. The series has become so popular around the world that many tourists now visit Oxford specifically to try to seek out Morse's sleuthing grounds.

To cater for this massive interest, the local tourist information centre has just set up an official walking tour especially for all the Inspector Morse location-spotters. Taking in colleges, museums, pubs and gardens, the tour is intended for true Morse enthusiasts, but you need not be terribly well-versed in the Inspector's code – on the walk I joined our guide was quite happy to change the itinerary to suit the wishes of the party.

The majority of tourists in my group requested a tour that took in some of the more general Oxford sights as well as those associated with Morse. The two-hour meander around the city saw us blinking up at the Ashmolean Museum from the steps of the Ran-



The Sheldonian Theatre, in the sleuthing ground of Inspector Morse

dolph Hotel, dodging the college tortoise at Brasenose College, gargoyle-spotting at Exeter College, admiring the effects of the light outside the Sheldonian Theatre, catching an impromptu cello recital inside a college chapel and stepping on to Addison's Walk at Magdalen, all the time being reminded of numerous classic Morse scenarios.

Scoring a few Brownie points for herself, our tele-literate guide revealed our naivety at the liberties taken by TV programme makers. The "colleges" frequented by Morse, it seems, are in fact an imaginative assortment of various bits of different colleges pieced together to deceive viewers. And our Oxford tour guide was especially scathing about one particular

episode that featured ... an Oxford tour guide. The on-screen reputation of the profession was tarnished by the provision of some very suspect information indeed.

The Morse tour ticket also includes reduced admission to Carfax Tower, a regular location in the programmes. From the very top of the tower you get a chance to peer down into those college quadrangles that you wouldn't otherwise be able to see.

Living in Oxford myself, and wearing heels well worn by several self-devised walking tours staged for friends visiting the city, I wasn't initially inflamed by the prospect of spending a blustery March afternoon visiting the scenes of various invented murders around the city. However, I came away

knowing a great deal more about Oxford, as well as its screen appearances. Certainly for anyone who hasn't previously explored the dreaming spires and is a fan of Dexter's dreamed-up stories, the Morse tour makes for an entertaining as well as educational way to explore the city.

Inspector Morse tours run on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays, between March and October. They start at 1.30pm from outside the Oxford Information Centre in the Old School in Gloucester Green (beside the bus station). Prices are £4.50 for adults and £3 for children, including a voucher for reduced admission to Carfax Tower. The tour lasts for two hours. For more info, call 01865 726871 or fax 01865 240261.

Our guide scored
Brownie points by revealing our naivety at the liberties taken by TV programme makers!

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I want to be a ranger ...

The city worker's dream is within reach, thanks to the demand for managed wild habitats. By Hamish Scott

To abandon a well-paid career for a working life in the country is an occasional dream of many a city dweller who has spent too many years staring at a computer screen whilst longing for the sight of buzzards wheeling in an open sky. Most probably dismiss such thoughts as a fantasy, but at agricultural colleges up and down the country a curious phenomenon has emerged: the middle-aged professional retraining for a new career in nature conservation.

"I was always interested in conservation, even in my childhood when it was just called natural history," says Julian Cross, a 44-year-old student at Lackham College in Wiltshire. "I'd go out to the Chilterns with my father to hunt butterflies and I could identify all the wild flowers, but when it came to a career, none of that seemed relevant." Instead, Julian became an archaeological illustrator, escaping only at weekends to satisfy his love of nature.

But attitudes to conservation and the countryside have changed dramatically since Julian left school. Our national parks and forests are visited by millions each year. Unspoilt stretches of the coastline have been acquired by organisations such as the National Trust; downland has been taken out of cultivation and given over to public access; green lanes and ridge ways are now busier than they have been since the advent of the motor car. This new view of the countryside as a popular amenity rather than an agricultural resource has been matched by an increased concern for its proper conservation: coppicing is on the increase, new hedges are being laid, dry-stone walls repaired, and rare habitats preserved as sites of special scientific interest.

Such changes have created a



Country custodian: Julian Cross retraining for a new career in nature conservation

PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN LAWRENCE

demand for country rangers, wardens and custodians trained in ways that might seem strange to some traditional estate managers. They must treat members of the public as welcome visitors, not trespassers, even when a child is swinging on a fragile gate. Their concern for wildlife must extend to birds of prey and other species that a gamekeeper would classify as vermin. They must be prepared for constant scrutiny of all they do, and to justify even the felling of a tree. Experience with people, enthusiasm, and a proven interest in conservation are the qualities required; even those with roots set deep in city pavements may prove to be suited to the life.

Most jobs in nature conserva-

tion now require a qualification in countryside management, available at most agricultural colleges, and mature students are generally encouraged. Julian had little difficulty in being accepted on a two-year part-time course at Lackham, leading to an advanced national certificate. The academic course is wide-ranging, with an emphasis on business studies: managing a National Trust estate, or even a remote wildlife preserve, is no refuge from the modern world of market forces.

Julian is now about to start his final term at Lackham. The past two years have not been easy, since the need to spend two days a week at college made it impossible for him to keep his job,

and a grant of just £600 a term has proved inadequate for even basic needs. Thanks to his artistic skills, he has managed to survive by doing picture restoration, but many fellow students have fallen by the wayside and returned to their old careers. Nor does Julian expect that it will be easy to find a job, for cut-backs have affected countryside management as surely as they have the world of archaeology. The difference is that he has yet to meet a burn-out conservationist. "It's a way of life," he explains. "A vocation to be proud of." And he's just heard of a post that may become available: warden of a water mill with riverbank and woods to manage. "Now that," he says, "would be idyllic."

One of the most fiddly yet agreeable tasks of the winter is to refurbish the frames that fit into the lifts of the beehives, nine to each storey. Each wooden frame measures 5in x 14in and contains the honeycomb drawn out by the bees from a central sheet of wax foundation.

In an ideal summer, combs come out the hive loaded with liquid honey, each cell lightly capped with wax. To release the harvest, all one has to do is slice off the capping with a hot knife and spin the combs in a centrifuge, so that the honey is flung out and the cells are left empty but intact. The frames can then go straight back into the hives, or be kept in store, for the bees to use again.

Yet ideal conditions seldom prevail. All too often nowadays, some or all of the cells turn out to be full of honey from oil-seed rape, which is white and stiff, like candy, and cannot be extracted. As a result, you are left with a frame full of goo unshiftable by human hand. The only remedy, I have found, is to stand frames along the fence of the orchard and wait for the bees to recycle the fruits of their own labours. After a week or so, the combs are clean, and the frames can be put away.

Unless that is, badgers find them. Last summer the reject frames survived one night intact. On the second morning the orchard looked as though it had been hit by a bomb. The grass was trampled flat. Frames had been dragged about and flung in all directions. Some had even been heaved through the sheep-netting and carted half-way up the field.

From the violence of the onslaught, I suspected that the raiders had been dislodged by the thin wire which runs through each comb in a zigzag, to give it strength. Probably this had caught in their teeth as they gobbled; nevertheless, they had managed to devour the contents of about 40 frames, rape honey, wax and all.

Hence the need, at this time of year, for repair work. It is easy to buy new sheets of wax foundation from specialist suppliers, but to fit them into place requires dexterity and patience. Each frame has to be partially dismantled: slim panel pins have to be eased out, and the thin little bars which have to be detached are easily broken. The whole contraption is usually encrusted with old, dry wax which has to be scraped off; bees are fastidious creatures, and do not like having loads of rubbish dumped in their houses.



Duff Hart-Davis

Bees are fastidious creatures and do not like having rubbish dumped in their houses

Gently does it, then. Each frame takes several minutes to restore, and I find I can complete only half-a-dozen or so before starting to feel that I should be doing something more urgent. With 50 or more to be tackled, the prospect can seem daunting.

The pleasure of the operation derives from producing order out of chaos, and from letting one's mind range ahead to next summer's honey harvest. Every winter brings a great fear that the colonies will not survive – that they will freeze or starve to death – and I can scarcely believe that they are going to come through.

I know that bees survive cold weather by forming a cluster which continually adjusts itself, the insects rotating from cool periphery to warm centre, and vice versa. Yet a severe frost fills me with dread on their behalf, and when they re-emerge – as they recently have from all five hives – it seems a minor miracle. Now, with a feed of candy in the top of each hive, they should go from strength to strength.

As I work on the eaten-out frames, I wonder why badgers do not knock my hives over, especially in winter, when food may be scarce: they must be able to smell that the brood chambers still contain stores of honey. Attacks on hives have been known, and badgers frequently dig out wasps' nests to get at the grubs, apparently impervious to stings. Besides, a well-used badger run passes straight through my orchard, so I know Brock is about most nights. Maybe some unwritten pact is in force between us: he knows that I do not harass him in his sett at the corner of the wood, and in return he does not harass me.

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BOX NO 1

gardening

Are you ready for spring?

It's time to get moving in the garden. Anna Pavord suggests a swift catch-up service

I wouldn't go so far as to say that spring has arrived, or anything sappy like that, but it sure as hell doesn't feel like winter any more. After trial by frost and a terrifying sequence of gales, the garden has suddenly changed tack. Instead of presenting me with a series of corpses, it tosses up new flowers practically every day. When last I trudged up the path over the bank – it seems like a lifetime ago – death knells were ringing all round. Now there are big clumps of *Crocus tommasinianus*, 'Barry's Purple' poking up between the stones of the path, and tiny labs of magenta from the snubbed flowers of *Cyclamen coum*.

These sights wind up a gardener. After a slothful winter, when even a trip to the compost heap with the potato peelings seems like a major horticultural endeavour, it is time to get moving again, to pick up the pieces from whenever it was before Christmas that being outside lost its allure.

The ground outside is still too cold and wet to encourage thoughts of planting seed. Instead I have been leafing through catalogues looking at quick-fix alternatives: young plants, mostly annuals that you can order through the post and grow on to put out in May. Last year, I sent off for plants of the brilliant blue pimpernel, *Anagallis monelli*, which grows wild round the Mediterranean; it's not a showy plant, and tiny labs of magenta from the snubbed flowers of *Cyclamen coum*.

Dobies sends out plants in five sizes: seedlings, miniplants, easipants, supersplants and pot-ready plants – the biggest (and most expensive) of all. They offer snapdragons, asters, busy lizzies, lobelias, petunias and other, more unusual, flowers such as brilliant brown and yellow gazanias, which I have just ordered. These are available as either easipants (40 for £28.25) or pot-ready plants (10 for £12.35). The last order date is 12 March, for delivery early May.

So, that's the easy bit. Jobs outside require a little more effort. First of all – hellebores. If you haven't yet cut away last year's tattered leaves from around this season's new flowers, do it now. The flowers will look very much better without a ruff of aged *memento mori* foliage around them. You will also cut down the risk of last year's leaf spot disease being transferred to this year's growth.

My column, Weekend Work, will return at the beginning of April to hound you with jobs to do in the garden each week. You have a few blissful, nag-free weekends ahead. If you get behind, and start muttering rebelliously, "I bet she hasn't done that", take heart in the fact that you will probably be right. Especially if the instructions have any-



After a slothful winter, it's time to get moving again: '101 Asters' (main pic), 'Anagallis monelli' (top left), 'Lobelia Cleopatra' (top right), 'Antirrhinum Poperte' (bottom right)

PHOTOGRAPHS: THOMPSON & MORGAN

thing to do with lawns. Or weedkiller. For a swift catch-up service that will enable you to stand at the starting line in April unencumbered by jobs that should have been done in March, read on. Sow seeds of sweet peas, seven to a 5in pot. They germinate fast. When you are choosing seeds, remember that deep pink and salmon-coloured flowers are likely to have less scent than blue or mauve ones.

If you have already sown seed, remember to pinch out the tops of young plants to encourage new side-shoots.

This particular iris has tall, handsome leaves, often to 3ft, with white, bearded flowers blotched with yellow. But all irises will appreciate a little attention now. Clear away dead leaves and other debris from the tops of the rhizomes and cut withered, weathered tips from existing foliage. They will also appreciate food. They do not need anything heavily nitrogenous, but a handful of bone meal or hoof and horn will cheer them up to

into, before you put in the plant. You'll lose less water by surface evaporation if you work this way round. Despite the storms that went with the recent gales, there has generally been a very dry winter and water is likely to be scarce in the coming months.

Split up large clumps of snowdrops and aconites when they have finished flowering. Replant them in small groups in ground refreshed with bone meal or home-made compost. This is a good way of kicking "blind" snowdrops back into action.

Skip dead blooms from camellias. They will not fall on their own. This is a grave fault on the camellias' part, making them at this stage in their lives look like last week's funeral offering. Camellias flourish spectacularly in cool conservatories, where their flowers, especially the white ones, do not get spoilt by rain. When flowering has finished for the season, repot potted camellias in fresh ericaceous compost to build up plants for next year's display.

Growth is galloping away on herbaceous perennials such as day lilies, but clumps of polygonum, campanula, rudbeckia and helianthus that you meant to split and move last autumn can still be tacked. Water the hole that each is going

into, before you put in the plant. Fit a water butt to catch rain. Put wads of water-retaining newspaper at the bottom of the trenches where you grow sweet peas or runner beans. Newspaper will be almost as good as blotting paper at hanging on to any rain that falls over the next few months. Stick a plant pot or a length of plastic drainage pipe into the ground beside any newly planted shrub or tree. Pour water into this, so that it gets straight to the roots, rather than evaporating wastefully on the surface. And mulch, mulch, mulch.

Nurse overwintered fuchsia plants back into growth by increasing the amount of water you give them. Trim them over lightly if they look scruffy. Don't keep them too warm; a temperature around 50°F is plenty. At some stage check – by knocking the plant out of its pot and looking at its roots – whether you need to pot it on into a bigger container. That's it. For now ...

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Hlower of the horn: *Helleborus orientalis*, known as the Lenten hellebore, whose flowers are weird, wacky colours, markings as individual as fingerprints. Most dramatic are the slate, wine-coloured flowers, the petals dalled with grape-bloom. These hellebores grow happily in deep shade, provided it is not dry and starved. The flowers last a long time, the colour slowly ebbing from the petals till they become like old parchment. As the flowers begin to fade, the new foliage comes through the ground; strong, hand-shaped

leaves that last all year, making a good foil for later perennials – that are less well endowed. Plant in October in part-shade in deep, well-drained moist soil and then leave them alone. They hate to be disturbed.

The Royal Horticultural Society is holding an orchid show today (10am–5pm) and tomorrow (10am–4pm) at its hall in Vincent Square, Westminster, London SW1. Plants for sale. Admission £5 today, £3 tomorrow.

The Alpine Garden Society is holding a show today (12pm–

4.30pm) at Burleigh Community College, Thorpe Hill, Loughborough, with classes for primulas, cyclamen, saxifrages, dwarf narcissus, fritillaries and corydalis. Admission £1.

The Harlow Carr Botanical Gardens at Crag Lane in Harrogate is holding a series of spring courses. These include: alpines today (1.30–4pm); propagation on Wednesday (10am–4pm), pruning roses on Thursday (1.30–4pm), and pests on Saturday (10am–4pm). Further details from the Education Dept on 01423 565418.



CUTTINGS

long, dark, glossy leaves and can be forced in a greenhouse to provide supplies before outdoor plants get into their stride. Send £5.75 for three roots, to SE Marshall & Co Ltd, Wisbech, Cambs PE13 2RF (01945 583407).

"I wonder if you can help with a book suggestion," asks Geraldine Martin of Penarth. "I should like to know if there is a dictionary in which one could look up the names of all the people who have plants named after them. I would like to be able to look up Henry, Hooker,

Miss Willmott, Parkdirektor Riggers etc, just to know who they were."

Some of the people Mrs Martin mentions, such as Sir Joseph Hooker, the Victorian director of Kew Gardens, and Ellen Willmott, the famous plantswoman of Warley Place in Essex, are listed in *The Oxford Companion to Gardens* (Oxford University Press, £29.50), but this book, which covers the world, lists only the most famous names in any country. So Augustine Henry, for example, the famous Irish plant collector, is not listed.

The only book I know that is devoted to people who gave their names to plants is *Who Does Your Garden Grow?* by Alex Pankhurst (Earls Eye Publishing, £10.95). But Augustine Henry isn't there, either. Mrs Martin will have to make do with Mary Henry, who collected and named the phlox 'Chatterhoochee'. Nora Barlow (aquilegia) and Maggie Mott (viola) are other unsung heroines whose stories are told by Ms Pankhurst. The book is available direct from Earls Eye Publishing, Lamb Corner, Dedham, Colchester, Essex CO7 6EE.

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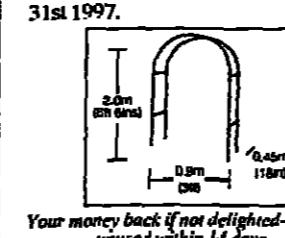
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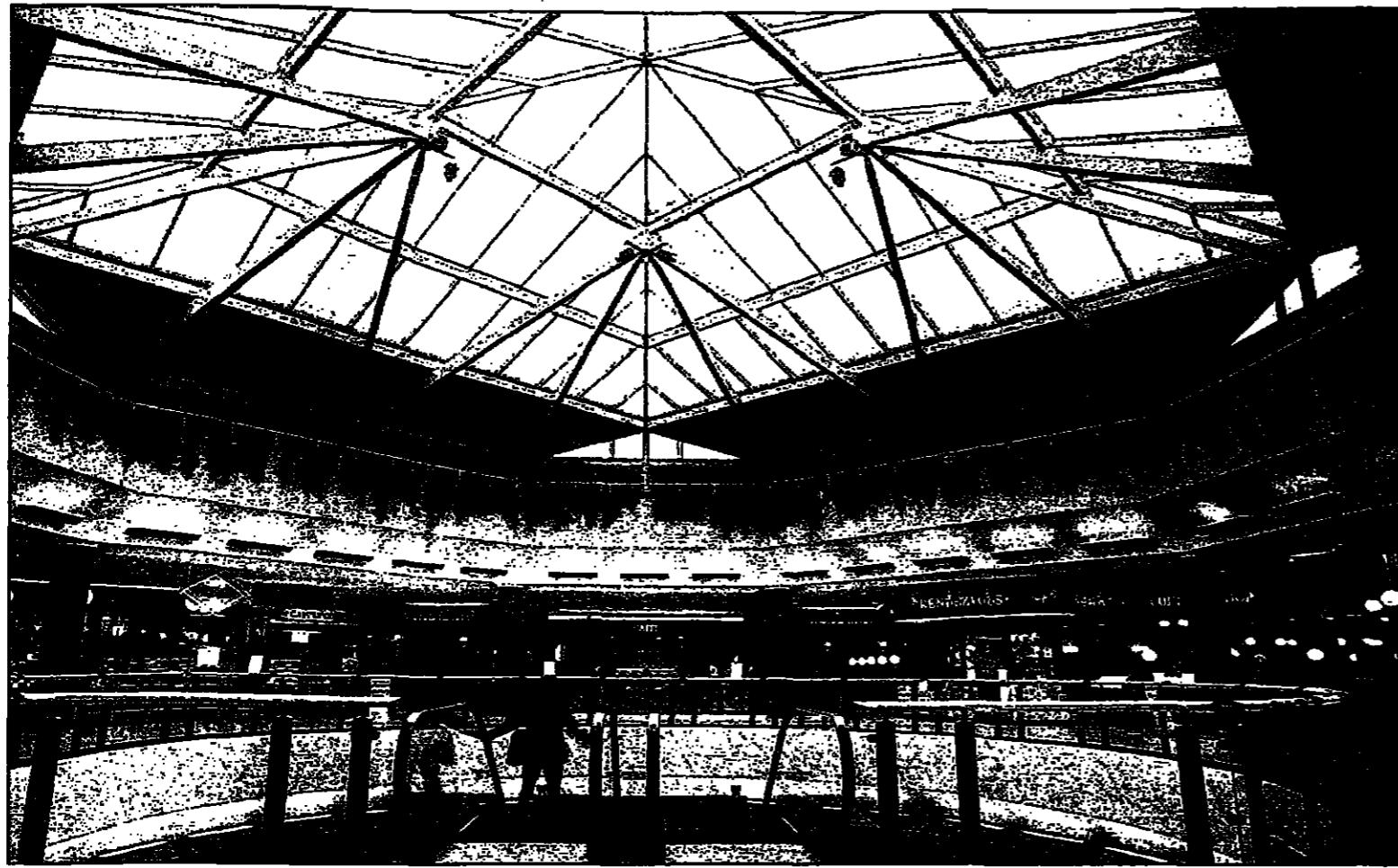
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all consuming



Brent Cross shopping centre: materialists need a centre the size of the Starship Enterprise

PHOTOGRAPH: EDWARD SYKES

The mother of malls

By Jane Furnival

For Britain's newest social tribe, a row of shops containing a food store, post office and off licence would not sustain life. Today we have shopping malls, and mall materialists need a centre the size of the Starship Enterprise for life's necessities.

Twenty-one years ago this week, the mother of all those malls opened. Brent Cross shopping centre, off London's North Circular Road, celebrated its birthday. Shoppers were offered tea and coffee at the 1976 price of 25p (it's normally £1.25). Models sashayed down the walkways wearing 1976 fashions: flared trousers, floral kaftans, wet-look boots and cork-soled clogs.

A 21st birthday is a shameless marketing ploy worthy only of a mall. Does it mean that it's now a grown-up place to shop? Has it been drinking in pubs, voting and having sex for several years? Will it be going to university?

Back in the baby years, that opening week didn't go entirely smoothly. recalls Zubi Peira, fashions manager at John Lewis. Some customers became overexcited at the thought of something new and imaginative, that they couldn't get in a high street.

"An elderly customer, convinced that Brent Cross was one enormous shop, came up to the perfume counter in John Lewis and tried to pay at one till for items from all over

Changes in our shopping habits

The move to supermarkets

1976: 534 supermarkets; 51,494 independent small shops. In 1976, of our £8.8bn grocery budget, about 70,000 small shops took about 30 per cent of our spending (£2.7bn). Supermarkets took about 50 per cent of our spending (£4.4bn).

In 1971 we spent less on food: £4.2bn.

By 1979, we were spending £13.4bn on food, a rise of £9.2bn.

1995/6: 777 supermarkets; 31,382 small shops. Of our £54.3bn grocery budget, the supermarkets took 65 per cent (£35.1bn).

The small shops, which accounted for 80 per cent of our food shops, took about 10 per cent of our spending (£5.3bn).

Sources: AC Nielsen, Shopping centres' own statistics, Biss Lancaster.

The spread of shopping centres

Brent Cross, North London: Opened in 1976, with 400,000 visitors in the first year;

Merry Hill, Birmingham: Opened in 1985 with 11.5 million visitors in the first year;

by 1996 the number of visitors had

reached 23 million.

Metro, Newcastle: Opened in 1986 with 12 million visitors in the first year; in 1996 numbers were up to 28.5 million.

Meadow Hall, Sheffield: Opened in 1990 with 20 million visitors in the first year; by 1996 visitors were up to 30 million.

Lakeside, Thurrock, Essex: Opened in 1991 with 9 million visitors in the first year; by 1996 the number of visitors to this most successful of shopping centres had reached 24 million.

NB These figures may possibly be inflated by the fact that video-monitors in shopping centres are known to count pushchairs and even large bags as "visitors". Metro Newcastle's figure is based on car parking, assuming an average of 2.5 shoppers per car.

New out-of-town shopping centres currently under construction

Bluewater Park, Dartford

Cribbs Causeway, Bristol

Dumplington, Manchester

White Rose, Leeds

Brae Head, Glasgow

The professional middle classes may be snobby about malls, but in 1976 we got what we wanted. Mugging was on the increase; Brent Cross had visible safety in the shape of the security guards. Most small shops could not offer the ease of credit card transactions and guarantees of sound goods; Brent Cross and the chain stores were more reliable. Refunds for poor merchandise were easier to come by, and credit cards had become the main means of exchange. High streets were busy, wet and polluted; now you could park under cover, sit down with the children, and find a clean lavatory when you wanted one.

Today, ironically, we prize the one-off, the shops that specialise in health foods, second-hand clothes, flowers. Individualists can stay away, and seek antiques shops elsewhere. Mall materialists like the idea of antiques, but they buy only repro. John Lewis stocks that.

Now do they want to buy scruffy, dirty vegetables, however charming the greengrocer is. The market area closes next month at the Arndale Centre in Wandsworth, south-east London. "Community essentials such as the fishmonger and watchmaker are being transferred into kiosks down the main walkway," says the centre director, John Holt.

"We're spending £17m on refurbishing, with themed restaurants and virtual reality games."

To stay alive, the centres must evolve. The Government has stopped smiling on them, and they cannot expand because of clampdowns on planning permission.

Hillary Hudson-Oldham, marketing manager of Lakeside shopping centre, says: "We're highlighted as the bad guys that spoiled it all. But supermarkets did most to spoil it, and we deliberately don't have a supermarket here." She has a cheaper area for smaller shops and foreign store outlets, so that shoppers can see the latest. She is proud of her two supervised play areas.

Brent Cross gets blamed, but the things I buy there are things I would have bought in the West End. Selfridges misses out, not the local shops. All shopping areas need to be managed. Hendon Central, built in the Twenties, is getting filthier, with deserted shops. If they turned them from 50 shops to 25 that worked, it wouldn't be so bad."

Professor Robert East, who researches consumer behaviour at Kingston University, Surrey, is even more rhapsodic. He claims: "For people with boring lives, mall shopping is interesting, stimulating and glitzy. In my last research, only 1 per cent of people actually disliked the shopping trip."

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Marjorie Price, who lives right next door to the Brent Cross car park, has no truck for the critics. She shops there three times a week and still uses local shops for special things, such as hardware and camera film.

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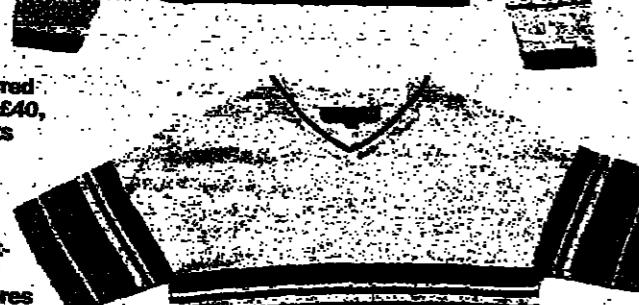
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Pull the designer wool over your eyes – at high street prices. By Melanie Rickey



Striped long-sleeved V-neck top, £20, also in navy and cream, by Top Shop, Oxford Circus, London W1; 23 Market Street, Amadeo Centre, Manchester (0171-291 2351 for local stockists)



Candy-striped cardigan, £20, by Etam, from 494 Oxford Street, London W1; 40 Queen Street, Cardiff; 79 High Street, Meadowhall Centre, Sheffield (call 0171-494 7732 for local stockists)



Red multi-striped cashmere cardigan (left), £312, as shown at Clements Ribeiro's spring/summer 1997 catwalk show; the

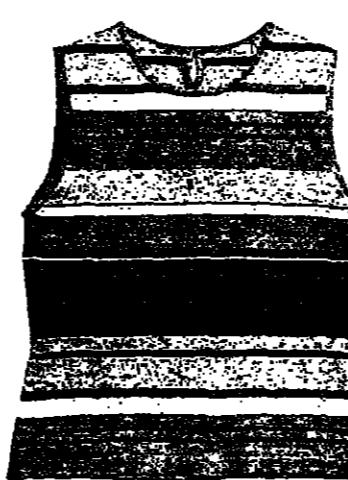
cardigan has a matching tank top, £212, and is also available with brown stripes, from Liberty, Regent Street, London W1



Turquoise and orange stripe short-sleeve polo top, £33, by Benetton, 255-259 Regent Street, London, W1 and selected stores nationwide.



Cotton acid-bright multi-striped short-sleeved turtle-neck top, £15, by Paul Smith Women, 40 Floral Street, London WC2; Van Mildert, 21 Elvet Bridge, Durham; and Strand, 22 Queen Victoria Street, Leeds



Turquoise tank top with variable multiple stripes, £22 (also available with pink and brown stripes) by Dorothy Perkins, available from stores nationwide (call 0171-291 2604 for local stockists)



PHOTOGRAPHS: TONY BUCKINGHAM

In Britain, we have the best and most directional high street shops in the world; and thanks to our rigorous art school system, the best designers too. François Gaigneau, John Galliano, Alexander McQueen, and Katharine Hamnett make headlines, but there are hundreds of nameless, faceless designers whose designs are far more likely to wear. They design for chains such as French Connection, Dorothy Perkins, Top Shop and Etam. And, while not set

ting the trends, their aim is to interpret them for mass consumption.

For this Spring, these mystery designers have agreed on one universal trend: multi-coloured, multi-striped jumpers. Their inspiration? Clements Ribeiro, the highly successful husband and wife design team (Fraco and Suzanne) who, in October 1995, sent multi-coloured, multi-stripe cashmere knitwear down the runway to complement their mainline collection. The cashmere knits, pro-

duced by Scottish knitwear giant Barry, were an instant success with American press, who the following spring (1996) were all seen to be wearing their stripes at the Paris ready-to-wear collections. Today, the knitwear range sells as well as their mainline collection of womenswear, and can be found in New York, Dallas, Los Angeles, Tokyo and London.

For those who may have fingered the Clements Ribeiro soft cashmere jumpers at Liberty in Lon-

don, the hefty price tag (hovering around the £300-£400 mark) was a reality check.

However, the High Street has really come up trumps with a vast array of irregular striped jumpers in candy bright, acidic or earthy shades inspired by the duo. Clements Ribeiro themselves have an affordable version, thanks to their collaboration with Dorothy Perkins. Now there is no excuse but to brighten up your thermal winter knits.

Under the Counter

Expenditure to be catty about

They puke under the bed, crap in the house plants and leave dead frogs in my slippers. These are not toddlers, but a pair of creatures who sleep in my bed all day, keep me awake all night, have chronic halitosis, and eat only mackerel in aspic. Devon and Tess, both four years old, are felines.

I can't recall life before cats. It was certainly cheaper – by about £650 a year – and that excludes initial set-up costs: cat transporters, litter trays, pooper-scoopers, baskets, fleecy igloos, electromagnetic cat flaps, collars, name discs, feeding bowls, electronic timed feeders, jabs and castration. Let's call that lot £400.

Other costs are unquantifiable: the savaged Baluchi rug (does anyone know how much a tassel-less one is worth?); the Art Nouveau figurine that I was about to take to Christie's – worthless pastiche it may have been, but not even the expert would have been able to tell from my little dustpanful of fragments.

The embarrassment factor is a big consideration before you welcome these beasts into your home (let's face it, they perform DIY colonic irrigation in public). Too often I've had to smile nervously at a dinner party guest while, behind him, Devon was licking the salt off the cocktail snacks. And Tess has an underwear fetish – particularly for anything black and lacy. It's very cute to hear her hunting cry when she appears with a freshly caught bra, but less amusing when you are showing the builder round and have to navigate him through an assortment of strewn lingerie. When I explained, his "pull the other one, love" look was painfully obvious. He thought his luck was in, and kept winking at me over his paint samples. (Mind you, his quote was very reasonable.)

Also, there are behavioural problems. My behaviour has become quite irrational over the past few years. I find myself calling up the garden: "Devon Malcolm, I won't tell you again. It's supper time!" The neighbours either think I am completely crazy, or are convinced I have an England cricketer living in the shed.

Nutrition is a worry. I return laden from the supermarket, but there is never anything to eat (except for a pot of Paul Newman pasta sauce that's been lurking for months). Instead, the cupboards bulge with delicacies such as "Arthur's Chunky jelly with salmon, shrimp and added Omega 6 & 3 oils", "Sheba with fillet of salmon and whitefish flakes in a light jelly", "Hi Life Gourmet slices of pheasant in gravy", and Kitbits, "a moist treat with cheese and beef". Soon we'll have "fritasse of seabream in a light raspberry coulis, drizzled with a prawn Marie Rose sauce", but it will still look brown and glutinous and smell like something you've stepped on.

OK, so I've dished out about £3,000 plus on them so far. I suppose they're grateful, in their own way, but it's so hard to tell. As a little old lady at the vet's once told me, "They do smile, you know ..."

Lindsay Calder

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Gavin Green
reports from
Geneva, the
catwalk of car
shows, where
Mercedes chose
its moment to
step wildly out
of character

It seems odd that Switzerland, Europe's capital of financial excess, should play host to a bout of sudden pragmatism from the world's motor industry. But this year's Geneva Show, which usually bears about as much reality to the motoring world as the Paris catwalk does to this summer's M&S fashions, was full of sober, sensible motor cars. In particular, it was full of cleverly engineered small cars, which promise great fuel frugality, bold new styles and low-cost motoring.

Just to make the Swiss feel a little more at home, the star car was a Mercedes-Benz. But instead of the usual oversized limo, from the back seat of which waddle overweight politicians, plutocrats and peers, the star Mercedes at Geneva was the long-awaited A-class, the smallest car that the Stuttgart maker has ever released. It is also quite the most radical tiny to since the Mini of 38 years ago.

It is ingenious on so many fronts. First, it's shorter than a Fiesta but has as much cabin space as a Mondeo. This remarkable space efficiency is largely due to its under-body drive-train, enabling more of the total length of the car to be devoted to people.

Second, it boasts Renault Espace-style cabin versatility, with the possibility of removing the rear seat and, if you want, the front passenger seat, too. Thus it can be transformed from a five-seater into a single-seater van. Removing the rear seat gives easily enough room for mountain bikes. The rear seat is also fore-aft adjustable. In its forward position, the boot is cavernous – and there's still enough leg-room for three backbenchers.

The cleverest part of the car is its twin floor-pans. They help give the baby much greater strength than other cars of this size. Mercedes says it is almost as crash-worthy as the big E-class, one of the world's safest cars. There is probably a bit of PR puff here – after all, the nose of the car is so short that there can't possibly be as much cushioning as on a car with a bonnet the size of an aircraft carrier's deck. Nonetheless, it's a fair bet that there has never been a safer small car.

From launch, engines include 1.4-litre and 1.6-litre four-cylinder units. A couple of four-pot turbodiesels follow in early 1998, one of which is reputed to average 62.5mpg. British sales start in spring

1998. No one is being specific on prices yet, but expect the A-class to cost from about £14,000 – the same as an up-market VW Golf or plain Jane Mondeo.

The A-class is a huge gamble for Mercedes, not so long ago one of the world's most conservative car makers. The company is betting that enough people are prepared to pay medium-car money for a technologically advanced baby car. If

overturns the bigger-the-car-the-better mindset which Mercedes, as much as any other maker, has helped to foster. It should prove particularly attractive in big, congested, affluent cities where small cars really are a boon.

Hon on the wheels of the recently launched Ford Ka, other car companies went small car crazy at Geneva. The Volkswagen group unveiled its Ka com-

petitor, the Seat Arosa, preparatory to launching its own VW-badged equivalent, the Pico, in December. The Arosa is a dull-looking little thing, four inches shorter than the Ka, but promising greater fuel economy. It comes in under the current Ibiza, just as the Pico will come in under the Polo.

Vauxhall showed a revamped version of the pretty-looking but otherwise pretty

average Corsa, with endless minor updates to bring it up to scratch. The most significant is a new three-cylinder, 973cc engine, reckoned to average almost 50mpg. It's still good for 50mph.

Rover, which invented the modern small car in the Mini and has been doing its best to try to improve on it ever since, showed yet another "new concept" Mini proposal, this one called the Spiritual.

Tentonic Tardis: Mercedes breaks the mould with the A-class; left, whose spacious cabin defies exterior Fiesta-like proportions

There were both three- and five-door versions, with little engines under the rear seat and highly space-efficient cabins, as well as various trad Mini styling cues. Sadly, and despite all the hysterics in certain media quarters ("It's the new Mini"), the Spiritual has about as much in common with the next real Mini, slated for the year 2000, as the Williams-Renault F1 car on display on the stand opposite.

The three- and five-door Spirituals are in fact 18-month-old styling studio models, dusted off by Rover to try to win some PR points and steal some of the Mercedes A-class's thunder. (Don't forget, Rover is owned by BMW, Mercedes' closest rival.) The real new Mini will have a conventional front transverse engine and, by all accounts, won't be the technological big leap that some of us had hoped.

Ford, which got the new-wave small car fad underway with the Ka, is now thinking small in the coupé class. At Geneva, it launched two-door Puma, a Vauxhall Tigra competitor using the mechanics of the recently revised Fiesta. Like all recent Fords, it looks either bold or weird, depending on your tastes. Like it. A new 1.25bhp 1.7-litre engine is the only motor available.

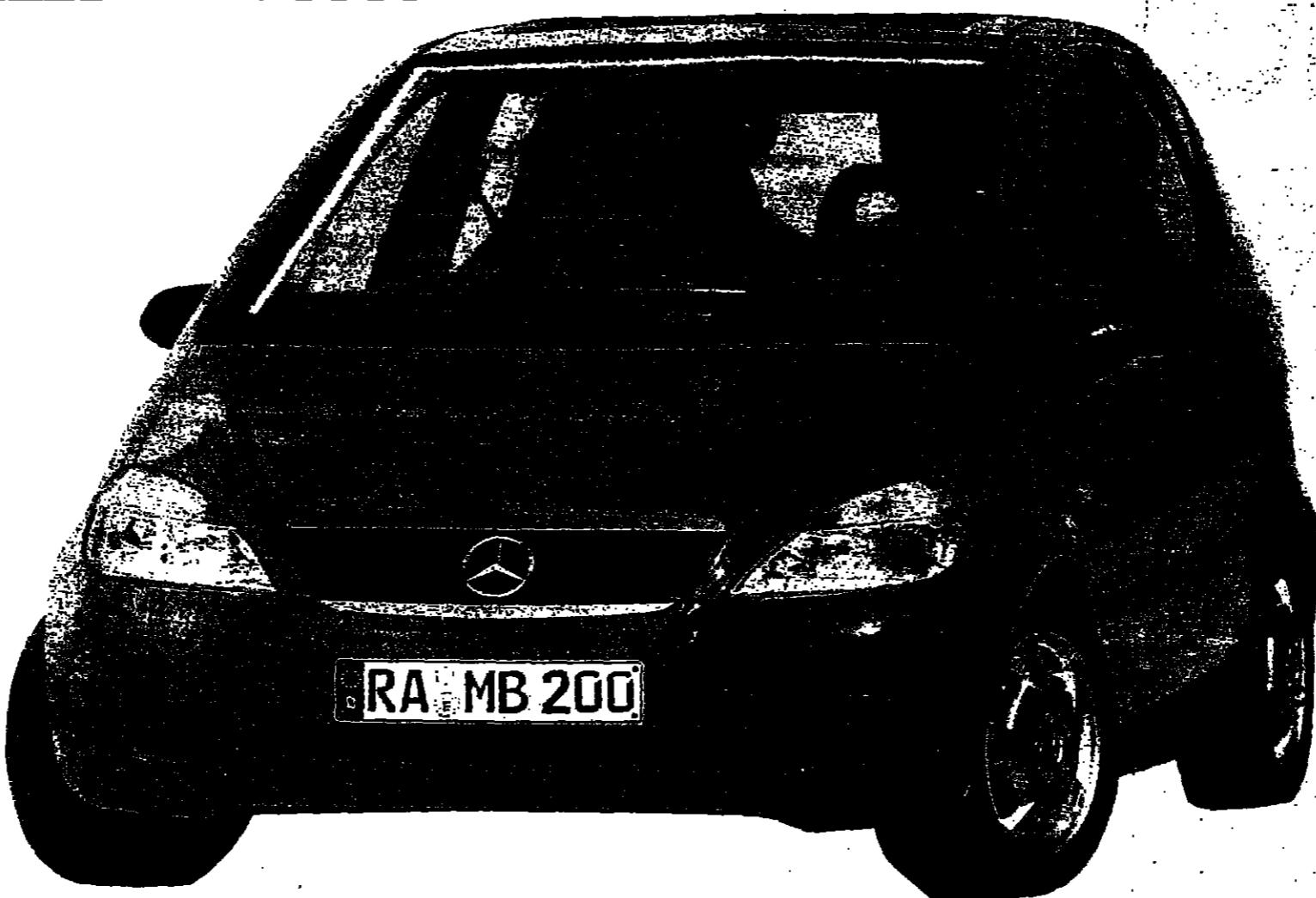
Further upmarket, back in more familiar Geneva Show territory, Audi – Europe's fastest improving quality car maker – took the covers off the new A6, rival to BMW's 5-series. It looks great, like all recent Audis. Early reports suggest that it drives as well as it looks.

British makers, who perversely have tended to dominate recent Geneva Shows (last year it was the Jaguar XKR, the year before the MG MGF, before that the Aston Martin DB7) had a quieter time. Even those masters of high-cost luxury, Aston Martin and Rolls-Royce, were fairly quiet. Geneva is usually where they make a splash, secure in the knowledge that at least here many of the show visitors can actually afford their wares.

Rather, Geneva showed that the small car is now truly back in fashion again. Look at today's traffic and pollution, and it's easy to understand why.

More of a surprise is who's leading the charge, and that Mercedes chose the Geneva Show to spread the good news.

The Geneva Motor Show runs until 16 March at the Palexpo, next to the airport.



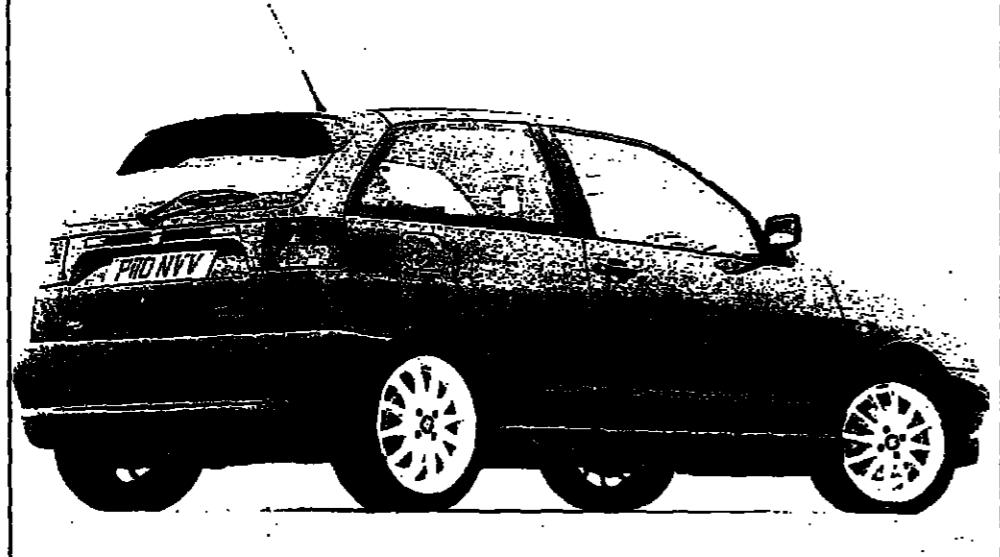
Birth of the baby Benz



Spiritual enlightenment: Rover was the father of the micro car with the Mini, but its latest bid in a booming market was more a spoiler against the A-class Benz. Ford's new Puma, right, could be the cat's whiskers in Tigra territory



Seat unleashes its pocket rocket



Road test: Seat Ibiza Cupra Sport

By John Simister

Self-denial in the name of a social conscience is officially over. Or at least it is as far as cars are concerned. Why else would a magazine called *Max Power*, full of souped-up hatchbacks painted in outrageous colours, be the most popular motoring rag in Britain? No doubt we can put this phenomenon, and the regrettable laddishness that goes with it, down to youthful rebellion. But there has always been a case for a good, hot hatchback, and on the back of its extreme resurgence in youth culture comes a rebirth in the mainstream.

Into this encouraging auto-sociological scenario is pitched Seat's latest and hottest Ibiza, the 2.0 GTI 16V, which is powered by an engine lifted from Volkswagen's Golf GTI 16V.

The Ibiza is a small car, virtually a supermini, and a 2.0-litre engine with 150bhp ready to burst forth is a big motor for one so small. The idea of big-engined tiddler

why the Peugeot 205 GTI 1.9 and the Renault Clio Williams came close to cult status among connoisseurs of driving, and this new Seat fills just perfectly the gap left by their demise.

There have been rapid Ibizas before, specifically a 1.8 16V, and a 2.0-litre with a lazier eight-valve engine, but the combination of cubic capacity and free-breathing valve-gear lifts the experience to a new level. You can guess this even before you scorch off into the distance, because the Seat sits on 12-spoked alloy wheels of enormous dimensions. There are various items of aerodynamic addenda, too, and inside we find rainbow-hued seat facings and silver dials to relieve the dark dourness elsewhere in the cabin.

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second after you press the accelerator. Simultaneously, the small Seat shoots forward – even if you're in a high gear and starting your sprint from a low speed – as though near-weightless.

That's one of the most appealing features of this crazy little car. It hurtles with so little apparent effort, with potent push on offer right up to 7,000rpm. This is not the sweetest of engines, but its muscles are abundant. And the easy hurtling ability is especially useful given the gear change's obtrusiveness – some honing is needed here – because you are not forever having to shift up and down to keep the power coming.

Then there's the handling, so interacting that you practically feel you're part of the car. You would expect a car like this to grip firmly and feel planted on the road, but the steering tells you exactly what's happening under-tire, and there's a feeling of balance which eases you on into fine-tuning your cornering line with the accelerator as well as the

steering wheel. The combination is captivating. You may even, for a fleeting second or two, imagine you're a rally driver.

Here's something to help your imagination along. Seat won the Formula Two World Rally Championship – open to 2.0-litre, front-wheel-drive cars – last year, using Ibizas not too far removed from this one. This year, the Spanish company's UK arm has created an organisation called Cupra Sport, to prepare cars for the British Championship. That's why the first 2.0 16Vs have loud "Cupra" stickers on the flanks and the tail, and lack a sunroof and air-conditioning. Later in the year, there will be a more discreet version with those accessories, and inevitably a higher price (£15,600) than the Cupra car's £14,595.

This is a lot of money, but then the Seat Ibiza 2.0 GTI 16V, from the extrovert arm of the Volkswagen empire, is a heck of a lot of fun. Welcome back, truly hot hatchback. It's as though you've never been away.



Seat Ibiza Cupra Sport

Price: £14,595 on the road. Engine: 1984cc, four cylinders, 16 valves, 150bhp at 6,000rpm; five-speed gearbox, front-wheel drive. Top speed: 134mph, 0-60 in 7.1sec. Fuel consumption: 28-33mpg

Rivals (with on-the-road prices) Alfa 145 1.8 Twin Spark, £14,600 approx. Arrival of revised 145 imminent in UK, with quality and refinement to match starting looks. Peugeot 106 GTI, £12,565. Smaller-engined than the Seat, cheaper, too. Not as fast but nearly as amusing. Suitable successor to 205 GTI.

Renault Megane Coupe 1.6V, £15,340: Intended to replace Clio Williams, whose engine it shares. Looks good, has less room and stodger steering.

Rover 200M, £13,995: Very quick, with clever Variable Valve Control engine, but less sophisticated than Seat. Rover wood looks odd in a hot hatch.

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BOB J 5,250	HAF 37 750	ME 8,000	RES 898 1,250
BOB K 5,250	HAF 37 750	ME 8,000	RES 899 1,250
BOB L 5,250	HAF 37 750	ME 8,000	RES 900 1,250
BOB M 5,250	HAF 37 750	ME 8,000	RES 901 1,250
BOB N 5,250	HAF 37 750	ME 8,000	RES 902 1,250
BOB O 5,250	HAF 37 750	ME 8,000	RES 903 1,250
BOB P 5,250	HAF 37 750	ME 8,000	RES 904 1,250
BOB Q 5,250	HAF 37 750	ME 8,000	RES 905 1,250
BOB R 5,250	HAF 37 750	ME 8,000	RES 906 1,250
BOB S 5,250	HAF 37 750	ME 8,000	RES 907 1,250
BOB T 5,250	HAF 37 750	ME 8,000	RES 908 1,250
BOB U 5,250	HAF 37 750	ME 8,000	RES 909 1,250
BOB V 5,250	HAF 37 750	ME 8,000	RES 910 1,250
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BOB Y 5,250	HAF 37 750	ME 8,000	RES 913 1,250
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BOB BB 5,250	HAF 37 750	ME 8,000	RES 916 1,250
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Can stock market investors learn anything from the way that market speculators such as George Soros behave? On the face of it, the answer has to be no. Investment and speculation, so conventional wisdom has it, are two distinct arts.

One is about the patient accumulation of wealth through careful selection of stocks for the medium and longer term. Speculation, by contrast, is all about trading short-term possibilities, where what matters more than the intrinsic value of a share is its trading momentum and the state of market sentiment.

The game, as Keynes said, is about trying to guess what the rest of the players have – not what you have yourself.

But don't be fooled into thinking that the distinction is quite as clear-cut as all that. Victor Niederhoffer, one of New York's best-known market traders, who has worked with Mr Soros for many years, wants us to know that investment, speculation and even gambling are all in fact "first cousins".



Jonathan Davis

Stock markets are casinos – but unwary gamblers may still win out

He quotes Ernest Cassel, the turn-of-the-century City financier who befriended Edward VIII and became a pillar of the financial Establishment: "When I was young," recalled Cassel, "people called me a gambler. As the scale of my operations increased, I became known as a speculator. Now I am called a banker. But I have been doing the same thing all my life."

That means studying what happens at the race track and in the casino as much as poring over the financial pages of the newspapers. His book, *Education of A Speculator*, has already sold 100,000 copies in the United States, which suggests he may be on to something.

now wants to tell us how it was done. His thesis, born of 40 years of experience, is that investors can profitably learn from any walk of life where people make their livings out of staking money on risk and reward.

Mr Niederhoffer is at pains to emphasise the great importance of understanding the house "take" in any field of money-making. As even the most innumerate adult tends to know, the relentless "edge" that a casino has at roulette from paying out at 36 to 1 on what is a 37-1 bet will eventually grind even the wealthiest punter down.

In horse-racing, something like 20 per cent of the money that the punter wagers is eaten up in the various "takes" – tax, the bookies' margin, and so on. Over time, it means that the racegoer has to make 20 per cent on his money just to cover the various hidden costs.

But although it may sound fanciful at first sight, what he has to say about horse-racing and the casinos is perfectly pertinent to the stock market.

As many professional investors will tell you, the mental discipline required to back horses and to trade in financial markets is very similar. It is all about managing money and making the right trade-offs between risk and reward.

Others, like the bid/offer spread, the difference between the price at which you can buy and sell a share or unit trust, are less immediately apparent, but just as important over the long term.

Then there is the Government, which wants its pound of flesh in the form of income and capital gains tax.

Add it altogether and it can have a significant bearing on your investment returns. The great beauty of

the stock market, however, is that it is one of the few forms of money-making where the long-run return you stand to make – say 7-8 per cent after inflation – is sufficiently large to exceed the "take" you have to pay to take part.

That is one reason why equity investment is a suitable place for pension funds and widows and orphans to put their money. Although Keynes likened it to a casino, the stock market is one casino where gambler's ruin does not necessarily await the unwary.

But note the word necessarily. If you buy and sell shares too actively, and do so unintelligently, it is perfectly possible for the "take" to erode most of the returns you make, just as it does at the race track. This is where Mr Niederhoffer's tales from the racetrack and the card table are worth noting.

The most successful punters are those who only bet where they have a clear "edge"; they make most of their money by betting against the most popular runners.

They are also shrewd enough to know that any simple betting strategy will only work for so long. Patterns always run in cycles, and there is no single Rosetta Stone which holds the key to long-run success.

And so, although you may not need to read *The Secrets of Professional Turf Betting* by Robert L Bacon to find out (as Mr Niederhoffer suggests), it is with the stock market.

The morals for ordinary investors are clear. Don't trade too actively; it only enriches the brokers and the market-makers.

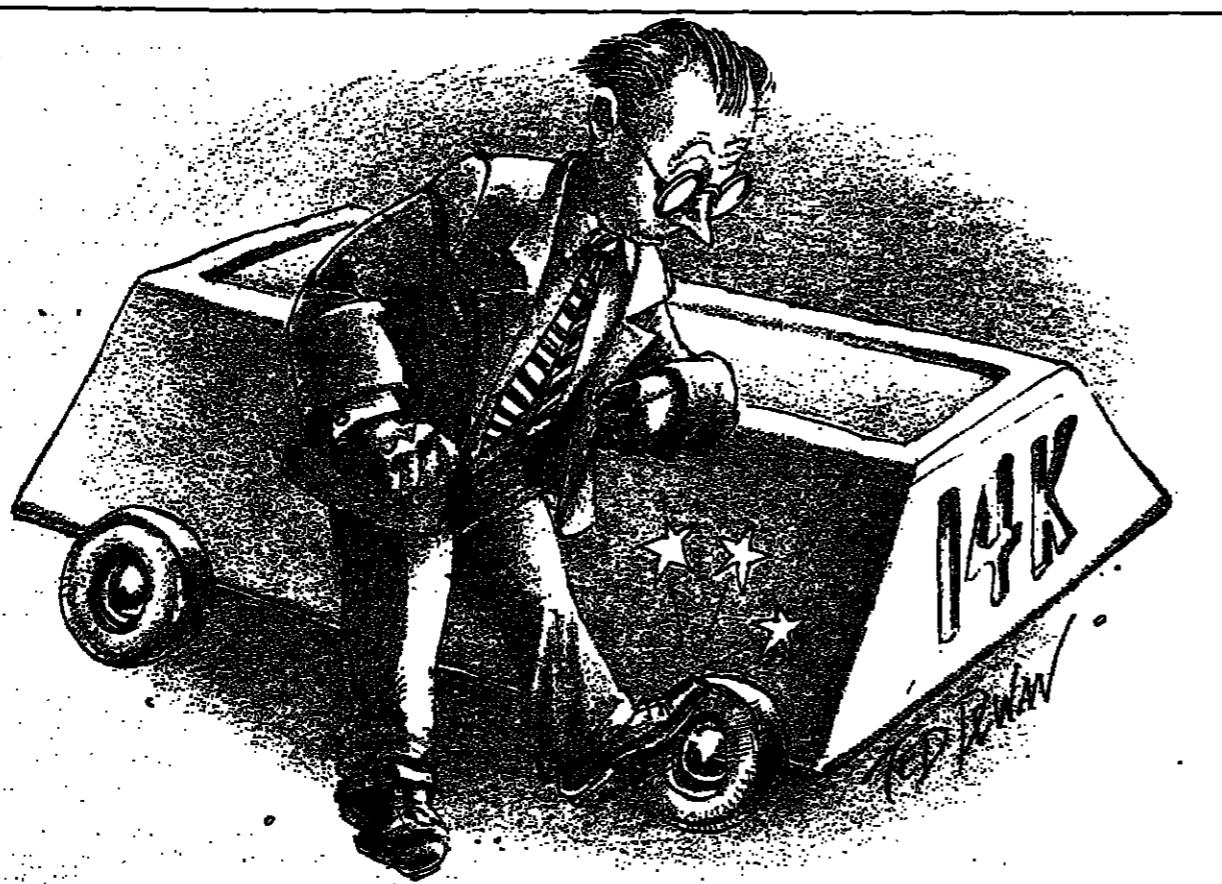
Don't follow the crowd too slavishly into popular stocks: they will never be long-run winners.

Don't fall for simple rule-of-thumb investment adages: a strategy based on picking the highest yielding shares will work well for a while, but not for ever.

Look to put your money into areas where you believe you have some "edge", and allow time and compound interest to do the rest for you.

Can gold be mined for profits?

Prices have been bubbling up recently. Rachel Fixsen considers the latest rush



No matter how splendidly equity markets may perform, even the most unsentimental investor will always find something alluring in the precious gleam of yellow metal – gold.

As if to encourage the cupidity of investors in this, the sexiest of metals, gold markets have been bubbling away in recent weeks, while bullion prices have heated up.

Gold reached \$360 (£225) a troy ounce at the end of last week, up from \$337 a fortnight before, as buyers stopped worrying European central banks would offload their vast gold stocks on to the market.

Small investors might now be tempted into the action by buying the yellow metal. But you could burn your fingers by dipping in – unless you really pick your moment.

"It's better [at this price] than above \$400... but whenever small investors move in it's too late and the smart money's already thinking of an exit route," warns Andy Smith, precious metals analyst at UBS, the Swiss banking group.

Nigel Tooley, director of the bullion department at auctioneers Spink, says: "It's a question of getting in when the price is low and getting out when it's high." You could have made a reasonable profit by buying gold a few weeks ago when it was £208 an ounce and selling it now at £223, he adds.

If you hope to join a gold rush, consider shares of gold mining companies Ashanti, Kinross or Driefontein. Their performance often exaggerates movements in gold prices. If you believe gold will rise, investing in gold shares would give you three times the result – either way.

Mercury Asset Management's Gold & General fund and Save & Prosper's Gold &

Exploration funds are two high-risk unit trusts investing in gold shares.

People buy gold unit trust investments for several reasons

Save & Prosper's investment director, Michael Ashbridge, says: "Gold has a fascination with certain investors ... it always has a very speculative feel."

But he adds that mining firms are increasingly able to get gold out of the ground more cheaply, while hitherto unknown gold deposits in Eastern Europe are becoming accessible.

Gold-based funds did badly in the past 12 months, with a £1,000 investment having shrunk to £705.21 in Mercury's fund and to £861.61 in Save & Prosper's. But over five years the same investment has made healthy gains, standing at £3,086.85 and £2,321.47 respectively, according to MoneyFacts data.

Gold has traditionally been seen as a lasting store of value – an asset to hold when others are depreciating. But few of the old reasons for investing in it still apply. Economists

believe high inflation will be a thing of the past for Western economies as European Monetary Union approaches. And with no exchange controls, the need to hedge against currency devaluation has diminished.

Fears persist that European governments will sell central bank gold to raise money to meet criteria for monetary union. The Dutch central bank compounded these worries when it said in January it had sold 300 tonnes of gold from its reserves. Andy Smith at UBS predicts that in a year's time the gold price will have dropped, though in the next month or two it could bounce up towards \$400.

But prospects for gold are not all bad. Just before the 1987 stock market crash gold prices rose. This year, warnings from Alan Greenspan, the head of the US Federal Reserve, that stock markets are overheated could spark a similar spell of interest.

Demand for gold jewellery reached record levels at the end of last year, according to the World Gold Council.

which monitors about 75 per cent of the gold market.

If you are looking for a good moment to buy, any December could be it. January is traditionally a good time for physical gold demand, with people buying jewellery for Chinese New Year, the Indian wedding season and Ramadan, says Rhona O'Connell, analyst at brokers T Hooare & Co.

So these days gold is best as a hedge or for cashing in on a short-term bounce in the market price. Long-term it is as useless as stashing money under your mattress.

Apart from short-term fluctuations, the price has stagnated over the past 10 years. Gold peaked at \$850 an ounce in 1980, but since then it has covered beneath \$500. However, as our table shows, the dollar gold price index is distinct from local currency prices, which may be higher because of local demand.

If you decide to buy physical gold, the path is strewn with obstacles. If you buy gold bars, you have to pay VAT on them. And keeping gold in a

deposit could cost you around 1 per cent of its value annually.

You can avoid paying VAT either by holding gold offshore, or buying krugerrands or sovereigns which are considered second hand and therefore not liable for VAT. Spink sells one-ounce Krugerrands at about £10 over the market price (0171-930 7888).

Platinum can be a better short-term investment than gold. "When prices go up, platinum moves much faster and further than gold," says Jeremy Coombes, marketing manager at bullion company Johnson Matthey. The platinum market is much smaller, with world production only a tenth that of gold.

Johnson Matthey (0171-269 8000) offers investors bars of platinum in various sizes. For example, you could buy a 10 gramme bar for around £100. Most customers leave their bars in store in Switzerland to avoid paying VAT.

Gold is good for a flutter or to diversify large portfolios. But look elsewhere for an investment that really gleams.



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Getting a profit on the table

The value of antique furniture is rising again. By John Windsor

You could be sitting on a good investment if you buy antique furniture now. After stagnating for years, it has jumped in value by 14 per cent over the past year, outperforming both the equity and housing markets. Next week there will be furniture buying opportunities at the British Antique Dealers Association (Bada) fair in London, and at auctions that include a dining room sale at Bonhams.

The value of antique furniture will continue to rise at 8 per cent a year, according to John Andrews, who calculated the 29th annual furniture price index for the Antique Collectors Club.

The spurt in prices has been caused by the upturn in the housing market. Mr Andrews says: "We thought the wild fluctuations of the Eighties were over - but here we go again".

Mahogany dining tables of the Regency, William IV and early Victorian periods are

making the running in price, he reports. One that cost £500-£600 less than a decade ago would now cost £1,000-£3,000. The cheapest is not necessarily the best investment. He advises:

"Buy the best you can afford - £3,000-£5,000 will buy a dining table with sustainable value."

You do not need the eye of a connoisseur to spot finely crafted antique tables. The most visible clue is the "reeding" - the parallel fluted chamfers that decorate table and chair legs and the edges of tables. It is smooth if machine made but there will be rough cuts on corners if a v-shaped chisel blade has been used.

Grime - or, more politely, patina - indicates age and is worth money. The wood should have rich "figuring" - the pattern made by the grain - and rich colour. This should not have been re-polished.

When buying tables, look for good weight - a generous plank of mahogany for the top, a sturdy block at the top

of the pillar and stout bearers on the underside of the top. The casting of brass claw-feet should be detailed, not botched. Avoid mended chairs.

At Bonhams' dining room sale on Tuesday, furniture specialist David Higgs has raised pre-sale estimates by about 25 per cent compared with last year - but there is still enough demand to push prices higher.

Breakfast tables - more suitable for smaller dinner parties and, oddly enough, originally known as supper tables - are being fought over. Chairs are scarcer than tables, especially "longer" sets of over six. In the same sale is a set of six early Victorian dining chairs with curved "tablet" horizontal top rails: estimate £1,000-£1,500.

Estimates for tables in the sale are typically £1,200-£1,800. At Christie's South Kensington's furniture sale next week, estimates for Victorian extendable tables are in the £1,500-£2,500 range and sets of six late Victorian chairs from £800.

Early mahogany has survived the recession rather well: the Antique Collectors Club index shows a peak index of 3,265 in 1989, dropping to a low of 2,529 last year; it is now 2,976.

Stewart Whittington, of the furniture dealers Norman Adams, an exhibitor at the Bada fair, emphasises the staying power of the market. "Furniture is the last thing people sell," he says. "You're really busy when you sell your furniture."

Bada Antiques Fair, The Duke of York's Headquarters, Cheltenham Terrace, London SW3, 12-18 March, entry £10 (0171-589 6108); Bonhams Knightsbridge dining room sale, Tuesday, 2pm (0171-393 3900); Bonhams weekly sales: Lots Road, Chelsea, alternately Wednesdays, 1pm and Tuesdays noon (0171-393 3937); Christie's South Kensington weekly sales, Wednesdays, 10.30am (0171-581 7611); Lots Road Galleries weekly sale, Mondays, 1pm (0171-351 7771)



Sitting pretty: at Peter Lipitch's shop in Fulham Road, west London - a Regency mahogany pillar table priced £32,500 that will not be going to the Bada fair. Tables this size, 11ft long, are too big for the stands

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money

I suppose we should not be too surprised that the largest company quoted on the London Stock Exchange in terms of market capitalisation is now a bank. HSBC assumed top spot this year as the shares ploughed ahead reflecting sharply higher profits - helped by a strong performance from its Midland Bank subsidiary. Of course, there are those who point to the fact that HSBC is not really a British bank at all. It is The Bank in Hong Kong. But it is probably the truest global player in the financial community that can claim to be a British company.

It is remarkable how the banking sector has assumed such a significant presence in



Brian Tora

Shares in the financial sector are very bankable assets at the moment

stock market terms. Already the value of bank shares quoted in London accounts for more than 10 per cent of the value of all shares listed. Soon this will increase still further, with the demutualisation of Halifax, Woolwich, Alliance & Leicester and Northern Rock.

The result season just ended suggests the banks are having a pretty good time of it. Cynics, particularly those with long memories, will be concerned that the cyclical nature of these businesses has not ended. This may turn out to be less important. First of all there are the

technological developments within banks. Staff are vanishing fast in this industry.

Then there is the broadening of the range of financial services offered by banks. This lessens the dependence upon the strength of the economy and the level of interest rates in terms of determining profits. While retailers in particular look like getting in on the banking act, they are still obliged to buy in a lot of expertise from established players.

Is it too late to fill your boots with bank shares? Well, at 10 per cent plus of the market, no self-respecting portfolio should be without one. The introduction of all these new players may even push shares still higher.

Simon Knott, our own banking guru on the investment management side, favours Abbey National and Bank of Scotland. Abbey National has been pushing hard into associated financial services and is far more committed to the retail sector, rather than the more volatile - in profit terms - commercial sector. Bank of Scotland has delivered an impressive profits and price performance. It could fall prey to a predator, perhaps from overseas and the recent wobble in its share price, due to problems in Australia, has presented a good buying opportunity.

Our own institutional team (using just a little poetic

licence) agree - and add to the list Lloyds TSB, where benefits from the integration and rationalisation of the two core businesses should allow further profit enhancement. Indeed, only NatWest seems out of favour - amazing what a careless trader can do.

One thing is sadly lacking among bank shares though: issuing shareholder perks. Perhaps a cheaper overdraft or lower bank charges might prove a further incentive.

Meantime, the UK's largest index classification is a must for all serious investors.

Brian Tora is chairman of the investment strategy committee at Greig Middleton & Co (0171-392 4000)

Realising capital without being taxed

Share payouts can herald the taxman's advent

NAME: David and Yvonne Richards
DATES OF BIRTH: 7-6-1966 and 2-9-1963 respectively
OCCUPATIONS: Manager/housewife

BACKGROUND: David and Yvonne live near Cambridge and have two young children, Lauren, aged four, and William, who will be one in May. David earns £33,500 and has a company pension scheme through his employer, which also provides death in service and a widow's benefit.

Using the Save As You Earn share option scheme at his workplace, David has built up quite a substantial nest egg, the first tranche of which can be exercised this September. However, there are tax implications to share option schemes and the two other schemes he has cannot be exercised for a few years. Yvonne works one day a week, which brings in a small salary to help with general living expenses.

They have moved house a number of times and are in the throes of completing their latest move. They have a large mortgage of approximately £100,000. They have very little money in the building society and David has a personal accident policy.

THE PROBLEM: David and Yvonne want to reduce their mortgage because they feel rather exposed with their high level of debt at the moment. They also want to ensure they are making the most of their pension arrangements and are looking to build up a sum in the building society and to start a longer-term savings plan to help with Lauren's and William's education at university. They have both made wills.

THE ADVISER: Tim Cockerill, investment director of Whitechurch Securities, a firm of

independent financial advisers, based in Bristol.

THE ADVICE: The key to achieving David's and Yvonne's objectives is through reducing their mortgage. As they have no spare money in the building society their only route to do this is through the share option scheme.

In September, when the first tranche of David's share options becomes available they will have in the order of £34,000, but if they were to realise all of that money they would face a capital gains tax bill of approximately £5,000.

In order to minimise their liability to tax David should look to gift to Yvonne the maximum number of shares possible at the time the scheme is exercised to enable her to use her capital gains exemption, which will be £6,500.

David can obviously use his exemption in the same way. In addition, he can transfer £3,000 from the share option scheme into a single-company PEP and that would then allow him to raise money free of taxation. As a rough estimate (because of fluctuating share prices) they will have approximately £20,000 that they could use to reduce their mortgage.

Reducing their mortgage would then reduce their monthly payments by something in the order of £120. However, my recommendation would be to reduce the mortgage by £16,000 and retain the balance of £4,000 in their building society to act as a buffer against unforeseen expenses. This would still reduce their monthly payments by about £100.

The alternative is to use all of the money to reduce the mortgage. As Yvonne and Richard no doubt realise, these figures can be juggled several ways. Their building society ac-

tions would then reduce their monthly payments by something in the order of £120. However, my recommendation would be to reduce the mortgage by £16,000 and retain the balance of £4,000 in their building society to act as a buffer against unforeseen expenses. This would still reduce their monthly payments by about £100.

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Investment for the future: the Richards family

PHOTOGRAPH: KEITH DOBBY

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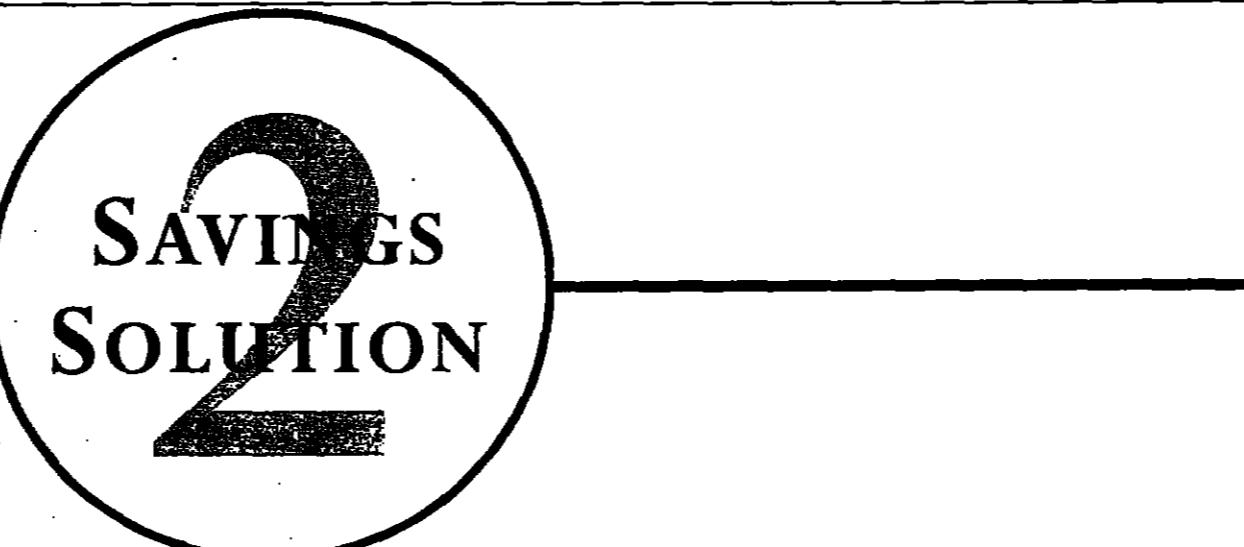
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Changes that will affect us all

Nic Cicutti on plans to reform the state pension system

Why is the Government reforming the state pension system?

The number of people of pensionable age will rise from 8.9 million in 1991 to 13.5 million by 2030. Meanwhile, there will be a falling proportion of people in work to support them.

How are pensions affected?

The state pension scheme, funded by National Insurance Contributions (NICs), is a Pay-As-You-Go system. We pay for those who are already retired. In turn, we hope our pensions will be met by future NICs. If fewer people are in work, it costs more to fund pensions. This either means higher taxes or smaller pensions.

What is the Government doing?

Over the past 15 years, the Government has cut the real value of state pensions. This has mainly been done by linking benefits to inflation rather than earnings, which rise faster. The change has been applied to the state pension and to the State Earnings-Related Pension scheme (Serps), introduced by Labour in 1978.

The original aim had been that the basic state pension plus Serps, which requires 20 years' earnings for a maximum payout, would make up to 45 per cent of an average wage. When the maximum Serps becomes payable next year, 20 years after being introduced, it is likely that the maximum state pension will be about 35 per cent of the average wage. This will fall to about 20 per cent by 2020.

The Government has encouraged people to opt out of Serps by paying general "rebates" either into company pension schemes or personal pensions.

What is the latest change?

Peter Lilley, Social Security Minister, is proposing to abolish Serps and pay a flat-rate rebate of 5 per cent of earnings into people's personal pensions instead.

He also wants to scrap the basic state pension, now worth about £61 a week, replacing it with a guaranteed £9-a-week payment into a personal pension while people are in work.

The theory is that by doing so, we will move away from Pay-As-You-Go towards a pre-

funded pension system, run by the private sector. The personal pension would give a better payout at retirement, claims Mr Lilley. If a fund underperformed, the state guarantees a minimum pension. Meanwhile, he hopes to cut the state's pension bill by £40bn to £10bn or so by 2040.

Will I be affected?

Probably not. People in their late 20s would continue as now. Those affected are today's teenagers, who would come under the new regime in the next five years.

Is there anything wrong with the proposal?

There could be. One must wonder whether anyone can guarantee to meet a promise to pay £9 a week forever into a youngster's pension plan.

Second, Mr Lilley has said the scheme will pay for itself because payments into personal pensions won't receive tax relief as they do at present – although the pensions themselves won't be taxed, he promises. But minimum state pensions aren't taxed at the moment. And which cash-strapped Government could

resist a bite out of people's retirement income in 40 years' time, when memories of today's promises have faded?

But if only young people are affected and I'm not, what does it matter?

The main impact for the rest of us will be in the area of public finance. In other words – taxes. The DSS claims the cost of the changes will rise by £16bn a year, reaching £7bn by 2040. If it hopes the extra bill will be paid by better economic performance, but if something goes wrong, today's taxpayers will end up paying for those already retired, plus the retirement of those younger than themselves.

Will these proposals ever see the light of day?

Highly unlikely, unless a miracle puts John Major back into Downing Street. Their main effect, however, has been to focus attention on the issue. Labour's knee-jerk hostility to the plan is only the beginning of what should be a much more serious debate over the future funding of state pensions.

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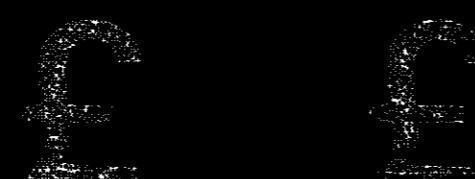
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A yen to get into Japan?

Choosing the right sector is the secret to picking funds, writes Simon Read

Investment is not an exact science but investors can reduce the odds to their benefit by picking funds which are likely to meet their investment goals. There are more than 1,500 unit trusts to choose from, for instance, but the choice can be cut by picking a fund sector.

Funds are classified in 24 different sectors, which are defined by the industry's trade body, the Association of Unit Trust and Investment Funds (Auitif). Within some sectors there may be just a handful of funds, while others consist of hundreds.

All the funds in a sector have similar investment activity or areas of operation—for example investing in fixed-income stock or companies in the Far East.

The two most popular sectors—those attracting most investment in recent months are UK Gilt and Fixed Interest, and UK Growth and Income; while the two least popular are Japan and North America. Unsurprisingly, the most popular sectors tend to be better performers while the poor performers are the least sought-after. There are wide variations in the performance and potential investors would be wise to do a lot of homework before handing over their cash.

To illustrate this we can look at two different fund managers which each have top-performing funds in the top-performing sectors—UK Smaller Companies—and among the worst-performing funds in the



Changing its tune: Japan has had a tough economic time but is recovering PHOTOGRAPH: REUTERS

world performing sector—Japan.

The Gartmore UK Smaller Companies fund is the top performer over one and three years according to HSW, a specialist firm of fund analysts, while Schroder's Smaller Companies fund is third in its sector over one year.

At the other end of the scale Gartmore's Japan fund is 78th out of 90 in its sector over one year, while the Schroder Japanese Enterprise fund is 86th out of 90.

So, why is there such a difference between funds from the same fund management houses? A lot is to do with market and economic conditions, of course. The UK has been going through a period of recovery and small firms have benefited from that.

Meanwhile Japan has been

going through very tough economic times. At the turn of the decade the positions were almost exactly reversed.

But to understand the differences between the four funds in the two different sectors, you need to look at their individual investment objectives. Gartmore's UK Smaller Companies fund "is designed to provide investors with above-average capital growth from a portfolio of carefully selected shares of smaller companies quoted on the UK stock market. The income yield is considered to be of lesser importance."

Not surprisingly, Schroder's

Smaller Companies fund has much the same stated objective: "to achieve capital growth

through investment in UK smaller companies. The fund will invest in smaller companies with the prospect of above-average growth potential. Income is of secondary importance."

Compare that with the stated objective of the Schroder Japanese Enterprise fund: "To achieve capital growth through investment in Japanese companies. The fund will follow a highly active investment policy with emphasis being placed on aggressive switching between sectors and a concentrated approach to stock selection. The relatively small number of stocks held will be in established Japanese companies with a proven record which offer the prospect of above-average capital growth."

There's not much long-term investing going on there, clearly.

But this is in response to a sluggish market where aggressiveness is practically the only way to make money. The Gartmore Japan fund adopts a similar approach: "The fund is designed to provide investors with long-term capital growth from an actively managed portfolio of investments in Japan. The income yield is considered to be of secondary importance and is likely to be minimal."

The key words are "actively managed". Looking a little closer at sectors can reveal much, and is a particularly useful way of finding a match for your own investment strategy. Choosing sectors simply on the basis of historical information could be a mistake, however.

While the UK Smaller Companies sector is currently a high-flyer,

it hasn't always been so, and history is littered with investors who've lost almost everything backing the potential of small firms. Conversely while Japan is bottom of the pile now, it wasn't always the case and there have been plenty of profits to be made in the country in the past.

Now could be a good time to be thinking about getting into Japan, according to John Kelly, investment director at Barclays Unicorn, whose Japan fund is among the worst six performers of all funds over five years. "We are optimistic about Japan," he says. "After a very extended period of adjustment, it is coming right. Japan had a period of excess growth and has to adjust to that. The pace of recovery is very slow but things are gently getting better."

An investment you can trust in

Ken Welsby charts the history behind managed funds

After a slow start, the idea took off in post-war years and now accounts for some £120bn in long-term savings.

At the outset, Municipal and General had just a few hundred investors. Today, known as M&G, its unit trusts are owned by more than 800,000 people and its total funds are worth more than £15bn.

Several of the big names in fund management are now part of high street banking groups.

Gartmore, one of the top five investment managers—savings and pensions worth £5bn—was acquired by NatWest last year. It now forms part of the bank's "wealth management group" alongside NatWest Life and Coutts, the private bank.

Similarly, customers of Lloyds Bank who want to keep their long-term savings within the group need look no further than Hill Samuel Asset Management. Since it sells mainly through independent financial advisers, HSAM is less well known than some of its competitors, but its funds include the Hill Samuel Emerging Companies unit trust, which has been the top-performer over the past five years.

Some of the most successful fund management businesses have been spin-offs from old-established City houses. Guinness Flight—which this week announced plans to merge its fund management business with that of Hambros—began as the mutual fund arm of Guinness Mahon, merchant bank with its roots dating back to 1836.

The early fund management vehicles were mostly investment trusts. These are companies in which you invest by buying shares in the same way as investing in any other kind of company. The only difference is that instead of making widgets, their sole business is investing in other businesses—and today their combined assets are worth more than £50bn.

Then, in the 1930s, along came the Municipal and General, an investment company which imported an American idea into Britain: the mutual fund. Or, as we know it on this side of the Atlantic, the unit trust.

In recent years fund managers' ranks have been joined by a number of newcomers, of which the best-known is undoubtedly Virgin.

In just two years, Virgin Direct has

attracted more than 100,000 customers and £500m into its managed PEPs, marketed on the brand

name, strong performance and low charges, which have set a new benchmark for the industry.

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- In fact, if you had invested £1,000 in the Newton Income PEP in January 1987, the value would now be £5,865—a total return of 486%. Investors in a UK higher rate savings account would only have achieved £1,728.

"The Newton Income Fund's unique long-term track record is derived from investing in thoroughly researched stocks. Long-term investors have been rewarded with this remarkable performance, which proves that in PEP investment as in most things, the best value is seldom provided by the cheapest offerings."

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Splash out overseas

Almost 20 per cent of potential investors say the fear of an incoming Labour government is making them steer clear of personal equity plans (PEPs), according to research.

Around 1.8 million people said they were likely to invest in a 1997 PEP before the deadline, but a sizeable minority remained worried by Labour, according to a poll carried out for Templeton Investment Management.

Investors nervous about the election and its possible consequences could start investing overseas. That doesn't mean putting cash in dodgy tax shelters, but looking at the potential of high returns by investing in foreign markets.

Admittedly, you need to be a little more adventurous in your investment outlook, but if you've already got a portfolio of a reasonable size then it makes sense to diversify abroad. Of the £6,000 which you can invest each year in a general PEP, up to £1,500 can

Simon Read
reports on the
best ways to
invest abroad

stand. These days it's easy to add some extra spice to your PEP portfolio by using your non-qualifying investments allowance.

Several providers, including Fidelity, GT and Prolific, have set up package deals for you to get abroad easily. Of course, you don't have to limit yourself to investing in funds within a PEP. The returns on an investment in an overseas unit trust could far outweigh the lost tax benefits of not being able to shelter your investment in a PEP.

Picking an overseas market is a difficult choice. If you think political conditions in the UK are turbulent, look at Latin America. One of the world's traditional political hot spots, the continent is famed for dictatorships, revolutions and internal strife – and often the only financial certainty is that corruption is rife.

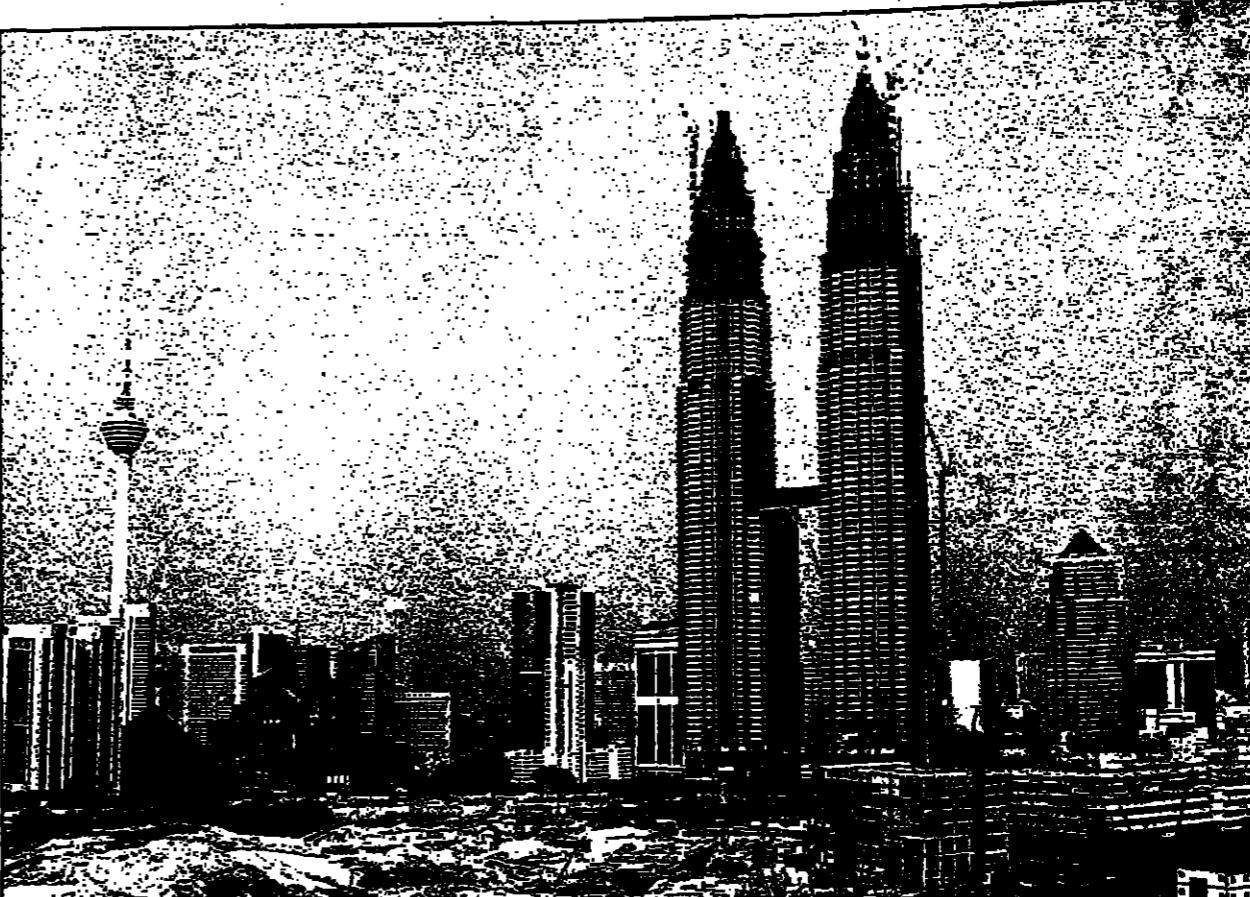
It is a background which has seen rampaging inflation, most notably in Brazil where, in the past three decades, inflation

has frequently been measured in hundreds or even thousands of percentage points.

It is not an area for the nervous investor. On the other hand, you probably don't want to miss out on the potential. An international growth fund could give you exposure in many different international markets. There are around 200 international growth funds from which to choose.

The top performers over five years are Prolific Technology, Save & Prosper Growth, and Britannia International Special Opportunities. Two of these funds are specialist funds which require a greater degree of confidence. But most fund managers will have a general fund investing in international growth.

Of course, you could go closer to home and just look at European opportunities. But it would seem to shame to make the move beyond these shores without exploring the wider world of investment opportunities.



Emerging market: Investors can now put their money to work in areas such as Malaysia

PHOTOGRAPH: REUTERS

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You should contact your independent financial adviser (if you have one) before investing. The price of investments and the income from them can go down as well as up. The value to you of the tax benefits will depend on your own circumstances. The tax regime of PEPs could change in the future.

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"M&G says that it will accept bonus shares from building societies converting to banks into its General PEP... it's possible that not all PEP managers will accept shares into plans."

Investors Chronicle
24th January 1997

There is a spread between the buying and selling price.

*The estimated redemption yield on The M&G Corporate Bond PEP was 6.6% as at 28th February 1997. At that date the estimated gross distribution yield was 7.0%.

It's time for a PEP talk

Top 10 Unit Trusts

Hill Sam UK Emerging Cos	240.72	UK Smaller Companies	
Jupiter Income	226.16	UK Equity Income	
Old Mutual European	215.82	Europe	
Jupiter European	213.35	Europe	
BWD UK Smaller Co's	202.37	UK Smaller Companies	
INVEST European Growth	194.89	Europe	
Thomson UK Smaller Cos	191.78	UK Smaller Companies	
Fidelity Recovery	184.11	UK Growth	
Henderson European Value	183.60	Europe	
Jupiter UK Growth	180.58	UK Growth	

These plans must be organised by 5 April, warns Neil Baker

With the end of the tax year looming, time is running out for people who want to invest in a tax-free personal equity plan (PEP).

Each year every adult is allowed to invest up to £9,000 through a PEP, which means any money you make comes free of income tax or capital gains tax. Up to £6,000 can be put into a general PEP and the remaining £3,000 can be invested in a single-company PEP which invests in the shares of just one company.

If you don't make use of your PEP allowance, you can't carry it over into the following tax year. Also, you can't put any more money in once the tax year has finished, although any income your PEP generates can be reinvested.

The structure is flexible. All PEPs have to be organised by a plan manager approved by the Inland Revenue. With some PEPs that manager will make all the investment decisions while with others you can phone the manager up and tell him or her which shares to buy and which ones to sell. It depends on how highly you rate your investment skills and how much time you have.

With the most common type of plan the manager will put your money into one or more unit or investment trusts. These are collective vehicles which pool investors' money to buy shares.

Different unit trusts are managed to achieve different aims – they might go for good capital growth, high income, focus on small companies or just make sure they own all of the shares in the FTSE 100. Most PEP managers will be able to put your money into a few different types of fund.

Some trusts are designated as non-qualifying funds because they have more than 50 per cent of their assets invested outside the UK or European Union. They are popular with investors who

think they can make gains from overseas share markets.

You can put only £1,500 of your PEP allowance into these funds. The remaining £4,500 can go into a regular qualifying fund but the investment must be made by the same PEP plan manager.

Other PEPs don't invest in equities at all. So-called corporate-bond PEPs invest in debt certificates and preference shares issued by companies. These are generally aimed at investors who want to generate income, not build up their capital. Tracker-fund PEPs, such as the one recently offered by GA Life, will try to mirror the performance of the FTSE 100 share index, or a combination of other indices, including the S&P 500 in the United States.

If you want to make use of your allowance this year, your money must be paid over by the end of the tax year on 5 April. It is not enough to simply agree to pay the money.

Because this year 5 April is a Saturday, there is even less time available than normal.

But investing in a PEP is a serious business – which shouldn't be rushed into at the last minute, especially for first-time investors. The undoubtedly tax advantages of a PEP account for nothing if, in the pre-election and pre-5 April panic, you invest in the wrong fund, which then falls through the floor. There are a lot of different PEPs available and all the options should be considered, including fund management charges. As a rule of thumb, more than 5 per cent initial charges, or annual management fees higher than 1.5 per cent, are too much.

The Independent has produced a free guide to PEPs. The 32-page guide, sponsored by GA Life, a leading life insurer, is available by calling 0500 125 888 or by filling in the coupon below. Copies will take about 10 days to arrive.

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مكتبة الأصل

The people with billions at their fingertips

Three fund managers explain what they look for when selecting stocks

Radhika Ajmera
Abstrust

The City has a reputation as a community dominated by men in grey suits. It is a reputation that's finally starting to change - and fund management is one area where the pace of change has been faster than most, writes Ken Webb.

That's because success in fund management depends on performance, rather than the old boys' network and increasing numbers of women are carving out successful careers

in the industry. A few of them, like "supermum" Nicola Horlick, make headlines. Most simply get on with their jobs - and firmly in this category comes Radhika Ajmera, who leads a team of 10 fund managers covering emerging markets at Abstrust.

The company began life as Aberdeen Trust, financing 19th century Scottish colonial development in Canada and elsewhere. Today it's a more broadly based fund management group with a strong international bias and partic-

"Whenever possible we want to visit the plant or facilities, not simply meet the management. We never invest in a company which we haven't visited and last year, between the 10 of us, we visited more than 1,000 companies in different parts of the world."

In addition to her team management role, her individual responsibilities include the Turkey Trust, an investment trust which invests in shares listed on the Istanbul Stock Exchange.

It's a market which has experienced some uncertainty over the years, but one which has recently rallied sharply as legal hurdles to the government's privatisation programme have been overcome. Although Ms Ajmera has a demanding job, she insists on finding time for "real life" away from work: "You know what they say about all work and no play - it would not be a life. It would just be existence."

Richard Hughes
M&G

Former chancellor Nigel Lawson has come in for criticism for taking a reported £250,000 for promoting M&G PEPs and some people say they have been put off investing with the company because they don't trust him, writes Simon Read.

But allowing such prejudices to cloud their judgement could be a mistake. For behind the slimmed, new-look Lord Lawson you'll find a team of committed fund managers.

Typical is Richard Hughes, head of UK equities, who looks after M&G's £1.4bn Recovery Fund. The 39-year-old former local authority accountant has been with M&G for 10 years, and is only the second manager of the fund in its 28-year life.

He deals in what are often called "turnaround stocks" - companies which may have experienced a fall in profits or change of management and which are in a state of flux.



Taking a gamble: Radhika Ajmera, Richard Hughes (centre) and Andrew Jackson are aware of the risks involved with their investments

"What I'm looking for is the quality of the underlying business and the potential for the future," he says.

Mr Hughes' expertise has led him to invest in several winners for his 140,000 unit-holders. Take Midland Bank, for instance: "We bought a big holding throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s which was disappointing to begin with. But when the bids for the bank came in from Lloyds and HSBC Holdings, the stock turned out to be a wonderful investment."

Other recent highlights

include Granada, Asda, Storehouse and Burtons. "These are all household names which anyone could have invested in," explains Mr Hughes. "But the trick is to identify where there's a real possibility of a turnaround. Our average length of holding is over five years, which gives time for the stock market to recognise the recovery of the stock."

Andrew Jackson
Hill Samuel

Running the £218m Hill Samuel Emerging Companies

unit trust and its companion investment trust has given Andrew Jackson a lot of pleasure since he took the job last May, writes Tony Lyons.

This top-performing fund

specialises in smaller compa-

nies and has a clear invest-

ment strategy which starts with a

"top down" look at the econ-

omy to highlight the likely top

performing sectors.

Once this is decided, Mr

Jackson and his team do their

own research to pick compa-

nies which they think will do

well over the long term.

"We are looking for those

which will make us money over the long term," he says. "Small company investment is about capital growth."

Originally, the unit trust

invested in companies with a

market capitalisation of under

£50m, but as the fund got

larger, it found it difficult to

find stocks it wanted to buy.

Today, it looks at companies

under £250m.

The investment strategy

tells the team that 1997 will see

a continuation of last year's

consumer boom, fuelled by

building society demutualisa-

tions, falling unemployment

and economic growth. "This

tells us to look at retailing,

leisure, selected housing

stocks, and other household

shares such as private motor-

ing," he says.

Mr Jackson became inter-

ested in the City during a work

placement in a company trea-

sury department as part of his

business studies degree at Hat-

field Polytechnic.

He intends running smaller

company funds for a long time.

"You have more chance of

finding a star performer among

smaller companies although

there are more risks."

1. Jupiter
2. Perpetual
3. Schroder
4. Johnson Fry
5. Commercial Union
6. Fidelity
7. L&G
8. Abstrust
9. GT
10. M&G

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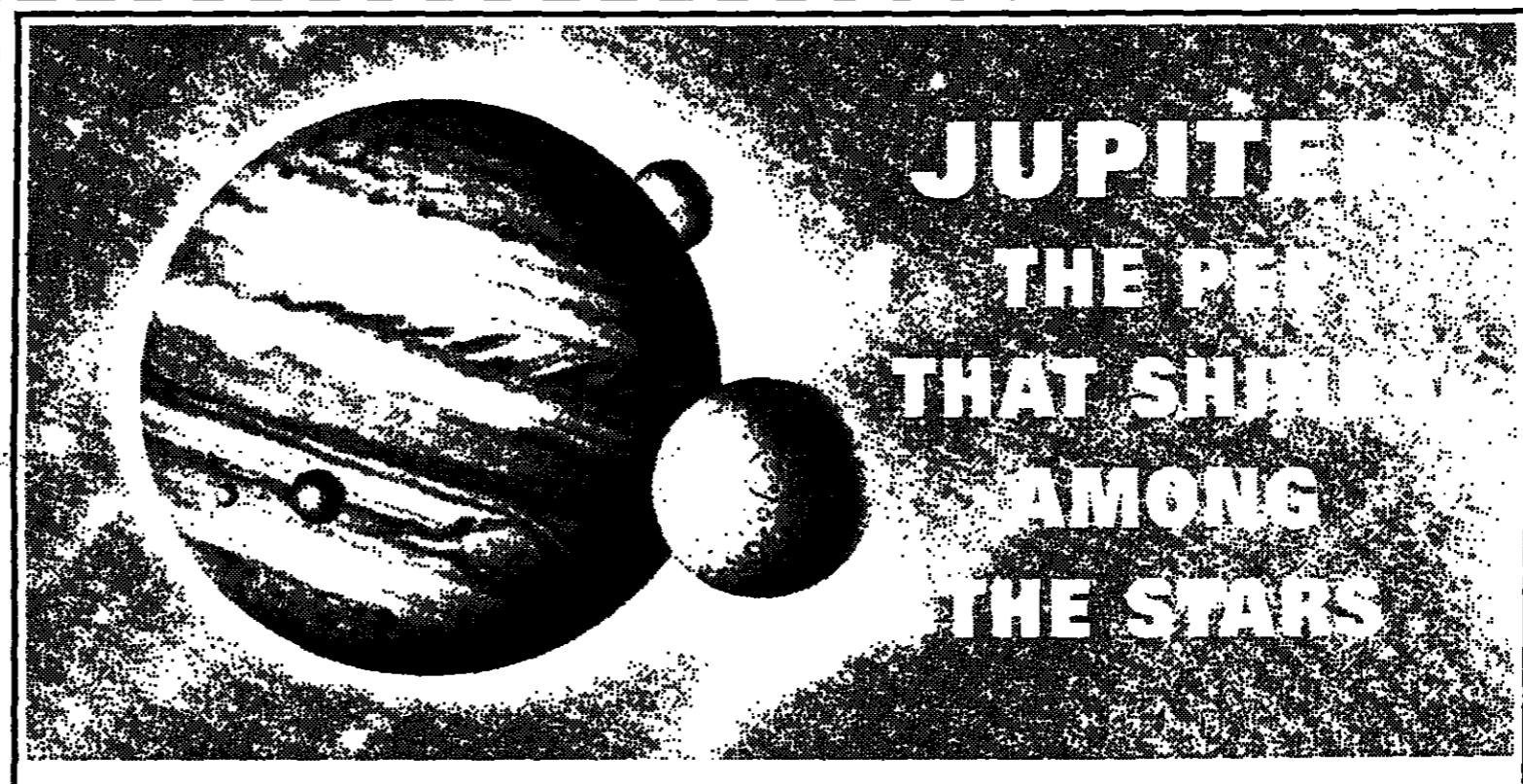
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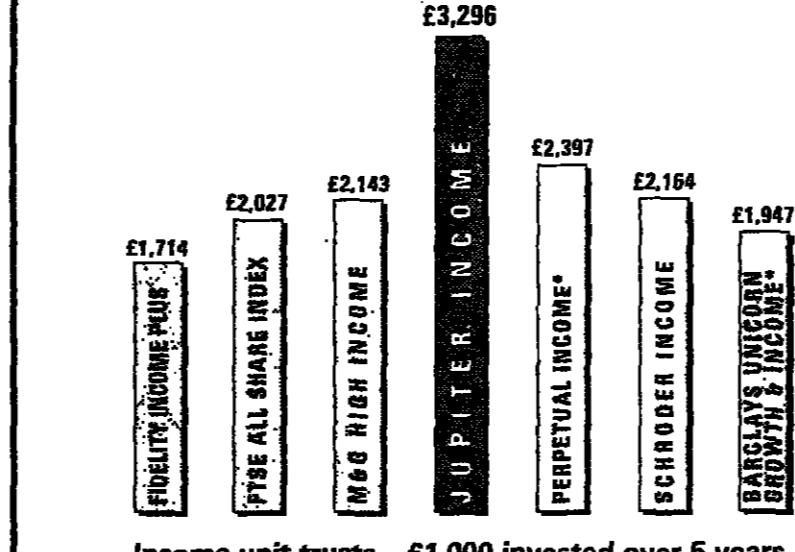
fund you select has a record of consistent performance.

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Not only has the Trust substantially outperformed its leading competitors over five years, as the chart shows: it has also beaten every other unit trust in the UK Equity Income Sector over one, two, three, four and five years, and since its launch in August 1987 (all figures to 1 March 1997*).

So with performance like this you can't afford to overlook the Jupiter Income Trust as your PEP choice.

Find out more about our star PEP, PEP transfer service and range of unit trusts. Talk to your financial adviser, call us free now, or return the coupon.



Source: Micropal. Offer to bid, net income reinvested to 1.3.97.
Extracts from UK Equity Income Sector (*UK Growth & Income Sector)

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*Source: Micropal UK Equity Income Sector - Offer to bid, net income reinvested.

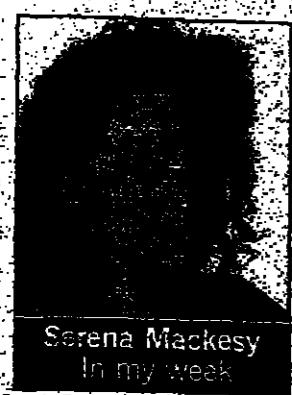
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Crufts should have a few people classes to relieve the serious job of judging the canines: skinny girls with curly perms, fierce women in brogues...

Eds stands at the back of the crowd with a carrier-bag full of crunchy meat-flavoured filler foods. We are watching the slow parade of the long-haired dachshunds. Eds pronounces it "dash-un" and I pronounce it "daks-un", and we each fix the other with a challenging eye every time the word comes out. "It's weird," he says, after the fancy red snappers have waddled, huge eyes fixed on their mistress' faces, round the patch of grass laid out for the judging. "They're all the same shape."

I do one of those eyes-upwards head waggles that nine-year-old boys are so keen on. "That," I reply, "is because they're all the same breed." He waggles his head back. "No, stupid. I mean the women." I look more closely. It's true; everyone showing a dachshund today comes up to my shoulder, has thin legs, barrel-shaped trunks, and floral swimming-cap handbags. They favour suns and skirt-sets, all of which seem to be rounded off by American Tan tights and bright, white trainers. "They're all wearing the same clothes," "Mmm," Eds heads for the Borzoi ring. "They're very much of a breed."

Dog owners don't so much resemble their pets as look like each other. Crufts should have a few people classes to relieve the serious job of judging the canines: skinny girls with curly perms, fierce women in brogues, skinniest suit, best jumper. Their behaviour varies from breed to breed as well: the toy dog owners conduct their business in steely silence, glaring disapprovingly at each other over their wire cages. The areas for huge dogs - Borzois, Aghans, wolfounds, deerhounds - are more cocktail party in atmosphere, with knots of jolly laughter and exchanged gossip. The obedience ring, with its sign saying "I Down 2 Stand 3 Sit 4 Down 5 Sit 6 Stand", so that the dogs who can read can cheat, is lined with people in T-shirts and skirts, eating foil-wrapped sandwiches and drinking tea out of thermoses.

The Staffordshire bull terrier owners are the best. Staffs are, of course, the dog of choice for fighting matches around the Birmingham area, and they've all come out to the National Exhibition Centre to scare the living daylights out of the other owners. Strolling King Charles Spanish people drop their eyes and speed up as they walk through their holding area, as though they have suddenly found themselves in a dark alley late at night. To a man, the Staffies have No 2 copper haircuts, tattoos and tassels chucked in their paws. And they're eating hot

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The big picture

Singles
Sun 10pm C4

A short season of films starring Matt Dillon (above) begins with this delightful comedy about the love lives of a quartet of Seattle twenty-somethings. Dillon plays a dead-end grunge rock musician in love with Bridget Fonda, whose real-life partner, Eric Stoltz, makes a cameo appearance, along with Tim Burton. A good cast also includes Campbell Scott and Kyra Sedgwick and the director is Cameron Crowe, whose *Jerry Maguire* has just opened over here.

Television preview

Recommended viewing this weekend
by Gerard Gilbert

I think I'm beginning to discern a difference between BBC and ITV costume dramas. It's in the BBC's love of slavish detail: the costumes themselves, the interior decor, the fruitier sort of supporting character actor. That's not to say that the BBC dramas are necessarily better. Take LWT's version of *Jane Eyre* (Sun ITV), which I'm sure will be pursued by critical derision all the way from Wapping to Canary Wharf. Packed into just over two hours, Charlotte Brontë's tempestuous love story is intensified to a fever pitch more associated with Mills and Boon than true 19th-century romance. Cliff "Heathcliff" Richard eat your heart out.

This may seem laughable to English Lit purists, but it's surely true to the original appeal of Brontë's novel — a swirling, proto-Freudian romance, with its dark, masterful, Byronic hero and his independent and intelligent heroine, Ciaran Hinds — last seen stealing *Invincible* from the series' nominal star — makes a humane Rochester. Samantha Morton a suitably quivering Jane. Kay Mellor's excellent script reinvents Charlotte Brontë as fast, popular, prime-time television.

Deacon Brodie (Sat BBC1) comes packed with all the BBC's traditional attention to detail. This is a jolly shaggy dog story from the tail-end of the 18th century. Billy Connolly is very appealing as Brodie, a notorious Edinburgh "character" — a slippery womaniser and master carpenter who specialised in door locks and hangman's gallows. His downfall is busily being plotted by Patrick Malahide, his opponent on the town council, and a strong cast also includes Siobhan Redmond and Ewen Bremner. My one criticism — since we're talking details — is that everyone seems to have very good teeth for the 1780s.

Balls to Africa (Sun BBC1) packs up a soccer team of trendy comedians (Nick Hancock, Angus Deayton, Skinner and Baddiel) and sends them to the poorest parts of Africa. Yes, we're talking *Comic Relief*. The idea is that their football team, Sporting Noses, plays matches against local teams while the celebs report back on how the last Red Nose Day money was spent. Flip, post-*Have I Got News for You* comedy and Third-World poverty are the uneasy bedfellows, with soccer as the metaphorical duvet. The result is surprisingly

entertaining and moving — as was intended. The thought also occurs that it would make a good starting point for a Ben Elton novel.

It's a better idea than *Omnibus* (Sun BBC1) and its celebration of Mothering Sunday — a film looking at stars and their mothers (Spice Girl Emma Bunton, boxer Lennox Lewis and Claire Bloom among them). It's the sort of staple "idea" that women's weeklies consider year after year and the laboured pun of the title — "Stars and Mas" — speaks volumes.

I don't know why, but it's very hard to imagine Roger Moore ever having had a mother. He seems to have emerged into the world fully formed and perfectly groomed, and, instead of mewling like other babies, quizzically raising one eyebrow at the world. BBC2 is rerunning *The Saint* (Sat BBC2), the glam 1960s adventure series which is the main reason we love Moore. This opening episode has the additional delights of Yootha Joyce and Tony Booth as hard-boiled Russian agents. What a loss Joyce is going to be whenever someone gets round to making a sitcom of Margaret Thatcher's *The Downing Street Years*.



The big match

Australian Grand Prix

Sat 2.10am ITV

ITV has the rights to this season's Formula One season and they want to make sure you know it. Network Centre's biggest coup was in persuading Murray Walker to bring his distinctive hairpin commentary style over to them, but not, of course, the old Fleetwood Mac theme tune. Jamiroquai do the honours instead. It's unlikely, though, that world champion Damon Hill (above) and his new Arrows team will be winning any honours.

Saturday television and radio

BBC 1

- 7.00 Harry and the Hendersons (R/S/I/T) (1686408).
- 7.25 News, Weather (3028775).
- 7.30 Felix the Cat (R) (3724798).
- 7.45 Phantom 2040 (R/S/I/T) (8045392).
- 8.10 The Real Adventures of Jonny Quest (5837972).
- 8.35 The Flintstones (R) (5013595).
- 9.00 Live and Kickin', Boyzone and the Spice Girls are the guests, Not Led (S) (7184479).
- 12.15 Grandstand: 1.20 Football Focus (2199137). 1.00 News (8170421). 1.05 Racing from Cheltenham 1.15 Racing Post for Cheltenham Handicap Hurdle (4769204). 2.25 Athletics. Coverage of the World Indoor Championships in Paris (3747081). 1.10 Racing from Cheltenham: the 1.15 Tote Ten to Follow, Handicap Chase (35881866). 1.15 Athletics (82504717). 2.10 Racing from Cheltenham: the 2.15 Peter O'Sullivan Novices' Hurdle (36125330). 2.25 Athletics (36120885). 2.40 Rugby League: Warrington v Salford Reds. Coverage of the whole of this Silk Cut Challenge Cup quarter-final from Widnes. Kick-off at 3pm (10584081). 3.45 Football Half-Times (9826069). 3.55 Rugby League coverage of the second half of the Silk Cut Challenge Cup (4779535). 4.40 Final Score (1282224).
- 5.20 News, Weather (7) (9819688).
- 5.30 National News and Weather (8057799).
- 5.35 Carbon (6132595).
- 5.45 Dad's Army (R) (5614666).
- 6.15 The New Adventures of Superman (S) (1857981).
- 7.00 Noel's House Party. Singer Paul Young gets a Gotcha; Samantha Janus, Sean Maguire and Jenny Powell drop by of their own accord (S) (631221).
- 7.50 The National Lottery Live. The last of the Eurovision hopefuls joins Lisa Stansfield for the latest draw (S) (743750).
- 8.10 Crime Traveller. Time-travelling detective series. Slade and Holly (Michael French and Choi Si Eun) investigate the death of Holly's aunt (S) (699363).
- 9.00 Deacon Brodie. See Preview, above (S) (4972).
- 10.30 News and Sport, Weather (7) (6071798).
- 10.50 Match of the Day — The Road to Wembley: FA Cup Sixth Round. Desmond Lynam introduces action from the day's only tie in the FA Cup — Derby County v Middlesbrough (S) (4628773).
- 12.00 World Indoor Athletics. Highlights of today's main events from Paris (S) (5214002).
- 12.35 Chalk. Second-sitting sitcom (R/S/I/T) (5876118).
- 1.05 Top of the Pops (R) (S) (7949606).
- 1.35 The Idolmaker (Taylor Hackford 1980 US). Good performances, poor period detail in this expose of the pop world of the late 1950s, based on the life of pop promoter Herb Marucato, the man behind Frankie Avalon and Fabian. Starring Ray Sharkey and Peter Gallagher (2360698).
- 3.30 Weather (75051538). 7.6 3.55am.
- REGIONS: Scot: 4.40pm Afternoon Sportscene. 9.00 Mind the Gap: St Anthony's Day Off. 9.30 — 10.30 Sportscene: The Scottish Cup. 10.50 Deacon Brodie. 12.20 Chalk. 12.50 World Indoor Athletics. 1.25 Top of the Pops. 1.55 Weather.

BBC 2

- 6.20 Open University: Art in the 15th Century: Florence (7391446). 6.45 Magnetic Earth (9192205).
- 7.10 St. Siena Cathedral (9935156). 8.00 Open Saturday (116243).
- 10.30 **Kept Husbands** (Lloyd Bacon 1931 US). Double-bill of movies featuring that gentle, unassuming but always highly effective actor, Joel McCrea. In his early comedy, he plays a sleek, urbane, and rather callous boss's daughter, Dorothy Mackall, and gets into a life of moneyed leisure (4518311).
- 11.45 **Rough Shoot** (Robert Parrish 1953 US). Joel McCrea mainly made westerns after the Second World War, but this Hitchcock-style thriller — about an American army colonel living in England who believes he has accidentally killed a man while out shooting — is a rare exception. The screenplay is by Eric Ambler (T) (5423137).
- 1.10 Film 97 with Barry Norman (S) (76481476).
- 1.40 **The Big Sky** (Howard Hawks 1954 US). Quite good, but very, very long Hawksian western starring Kirk Douglas and Dewey Martin as fur trappers doing business up the Missouri River in the 1830s and falling in love with the same woman — the daughter of a Blackfoot Indian chief (Elizabeth Thread) (19494808).
- 3.35 The Saint, See Preview, above (R) (9971427).
- 4.25 **Red Line 7000** (Howard Hawks 1955 US). A group of racing drivers cope with winning, death and romance — or off the track, in this misconceived boys-in-cars melodrama which gave a young James Caan his first major shot role. The doted-on racing footage was shot in the UK and USA by Bruce Kessler (53112663).
- 5.15 **Cruft** '97. Peter Purves and Jessica Holm report live from the NEC in Birmingham on the terriers, toys and hounds (S) (473653).
- 5.50 **Close Up** (S) (740653).
- 7.00 Cosi Fan Tutte. Live from the Royal Opera House in London's Covent Garden — your chance to combine shopping and opera with Jonathan Miller's modern-dress production of Mozart's comic opera, conducted by Dietrich Bär. The costumes are by Giorgio Armani, and based on his current spring-summer collection (S) (8662934).
- 10.30 **Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid** (Carl Reiner 1981 US). Clever and very funny comedy meshing out-takes from film-noir classics (*White Heat*, *The Glass Key* and *Double Indemnity* among many others) with footage of Steve Martin's private eye investigating the death of the scientist father of sultry *Femme Fatale* Rachel Ward (T) (323972).
- 11.55 **Windows on the World**. Double bill starts with video artist Bill Viola's visualisation of Edgard Varèse's composition *Déserts* and concludes with Gunther Kieser's lively animated film *Journey into Jazz*, which aims to introduce young people to a celebrity audience (S) (850934).
- 10.55 News, Weather, Lottery Result (T) (817798).
- 11.10 Grand Prix Night — with Murray Walker (223595).
- 11.15 **Grand Prix** (John Frankenheimer 1966 US). The soapies and loves of professional drivers are combined with thrilling racing sequences shot on location in Monaco, Holland and Brands Hatch. No press shots here. James Garner, Eva Marie Saint and Yves Montand star (9059802).
- 2.10 F1: Australian Grand Prix. See *The big match*, above (S) (84550712). To 5.30am.
- 5.10 Grand Prix Classics (1201644). To 5.30am.

ITV/London

- 6.00 GMTV: 6.00 News. 6.10 Professor Bubble. 6.30 **Barnaby in Pyjamas**. 6.50 Bug Alert? 7.15 **Dragonfly**. 7.45 Disney's *Up in the Wild Room*. 8.35 **Gargoyles** (6756798).
- 9.25 **Scratches** and Co. Guests are Rod Hull and *The Big Breakfast* star Denise Van Outen. Hardly boyzies and *Top of the Pops* (See *Live and Kickin'*, BBC1) (S) (24231798).
- 11.30 **The Chart Show** (S) (13663).
- 12.30 **Fresh** (11137).
- 1.00 News, Weather (T) (81739717).
- 1.05 London Weekend Tonight (T) (81738088).
- 1.10 F1: Australian Grand Prix. The qualifying laps of the Australian Grand Prix from Melbourne. Actually, all this happened in the wee small hours of last night and this is the repeat. Introduced by Jim Rosenthal, with commentary from Murray Walker and Martin Brundle (R) (2183446).
- 2.40 **Like Father, Like Son** (Rod Daniel 1987 US). Dudley Moore is in the first (and worst) of the 1980s body-swop comedies finds success. Dudi drinking a magic potion and trading places with his home 16-year-old son, Kirk Cameron. It's not a terrible idea for a comedy, but unlike Tom Hanks in *Big*, Moore doesn't give a very convincing portrayal of an adolescent (S) (74954427).
- 4.30 **Cartoon Time** (3437972).
- 4.45 News, Sports Results, Weather (T) (3427779).
- 5.05 London Weekend Tonight (T) (3658885).
- 5.15 F1: Australian Grand Prix. Let us forget a live update from Melbourne on the qualifying session. Plus, a look ahead to tonight's Grand Prix (985663).
- 5.20 **Chuckles**. Cher lies about her age when she fails for an older man (S) (9271929).
- 5.45 **Sabrina, the Teenage Witch** (S) (556934).
- 6.15 **You Bet**: Two power-lifters attempt to lift a five-ton karate expert tries to break concrete slabs in 90 seconds — and more (S) (906175).
- 7.15 **Blind Date**. Followed by *National Lottery Result* (S) (902359).
- 8.15 **Asteroid**. 2/2. Concluding the mini-series about the asteroid on a direct collision course with the Earth. The result of the missile attack on the asteroid is a hellish meteor shower — sending a dangerously large meteoroid heading towards Dallas. Sounds good to me (S) (95222682).
- 9.55 **The Clive James Formula One Show**. ITV's relentless pre-publicity for its first Grand Prix continues with 14 of the current Formula One drivers — including Damon Hill and Jacques Villeneuve — gathering in a studio to take questions from a celebrity audience (S) (850934).
- 10.55 News, Weather, Lottery Result (T) (817798).
- 11.10 Grand Prix Night — with Murray Walker (223595).
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- 2.15 Beavis and Butt-Head (R) (714799).
- 3.15 **Beavis, Bounty Killer, Lost Boys and McSheil** are three of the acts (S) (95642).
- 3.45 **Brass This** (House) (R) (S) (3293460).
- 4.10 **Film Night**. Janice Forsyth focuses on the new screenplay of Brett Easton Ellis's controversial book, *American Psycho*. Plus, an interview with the Warchowski brothers, directors of the lesbian film *girl, you*, Sound (R) (847951).
- 4.45 **The Best Specials**. Big Pop in concert (S) (7060070). To 5.30am.

Channel 4

- 6.00 **Sesame Street** (R) (51427).
- 7.00 **Dumb and Dumber** (S) (50501).
- 7.30 **Demis** (R) (571408).
- 7.45 **First Edition** (R) (9705663).
- 8.00 **Scoreboard** (S) (16427).
- 9.00 **Morning Line**. Look ahead to the day's horse-race card.
- 10.00 **Summer Football Italia** (35932).
- 11.00 **NBA 24/7**. All the latest from the National Basketball Association (S) (55156).
- 12.00 **Rehwicks** (21514).
- 1.00 **Siege of Red River** (Rudolf Maté 1954 US). American Civil War actioner combining the story of a duplicitous agent with the more traditional western theme of soldiers under Indian attack. Van Johnson heads up the cast (T) (94579972).
- 2.35 **The Sweater**. Bafta award-winning animation about the Canadian passion for ice hockey (2722024).
- 2.45 **Channel 4 Racing**. Brough Scott introduces a four-race card from Sandown Park: the 2.55 Barclays Bank Handicap Final, the 3.30 Burnt Oak and Special Cargo Novices' Chase, the 4.05 Sunderlands Imperial Cup and the 4.40 Hambo Countrywide Handicap Chase (S) (91909795).
- 5.05 **Brookside** (S) (7053408).
- 6.30 **Right to Reply** (S) (885).
- 7.00 **A Week in Politics** (S) (731).
- 8.00 **The Goldring Audit**. The gimlet-eyed Mary Goldring analyses the fishing industry, looking at the threat posed by over-fishing. The European Union wants a 40 per cent cutback, which could spell the end of life at sea for many British fishermen. To examine the possible effects of the crisis, Goldring spends five days on a Cornish fishing boat, looking at new technology, and talking to EU fisheries commission, scientists and retailers (S) (735).
- 9.00 **Last Chance Lottery** (S) (3595).
- 10.00 **Eurotrash** (R) (38366).
- 10.30 **The Show** (S) (8428935).
- 11.35 **Hill Street Blues**. Furillo finds the gun that was used to shoot two of his cops (T) (849427).
- 12.35 **The Client**. More from this ho-hum legal-eagle series based on John Grisham's novel. Reggie defends a pregnant teenager who wants to keep her baby against her mother's wishes (5108644).
- 1.35 **The Game Show**. Guests include Annabel Chong, who holds a world record having had sex with 251 men in 10 hours. Plus, a report on undergraduates who are obsessed with war games (S) (287625).
- 2.05 **Ricki Lake**. Women whose husbands are cheating on them tell all (R) (85073) (3224170).
- 2.45 **Beavis and Butt-Head** (R) (714799).
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ITV/Regions

- AMERICA As London except: 12.30pm Movies and Videos (11137). 1.05 *Anglia News and Weather* (81738088). 2.40 *Film*. Carry on Screeching (36527332). 3.10 *Cartoon* (34040808). 5.00 *Anglia News, Sport and Weather* (56950).
- CENTRAL As London except: 12.30pm *Principles* (11137). 1.05 *Anglia News and Weather* (81738088). 2.40 *Film*. Carry on Screeching (36527332). 3.10 *Cartoon* (34040808). 5.00 *Anglia News and Weather* (56950).
- CHINA As London except: 12.30pm *Principles* (11137). 1.05 *Anglia News and Weather* (81738088). 2.40 *Film*. Carry on Screeching (36527332). 3.10 *Cartoon* (34040808). 5.00 *Anglia News and Weather* (56950).
- CENTRAL ASIA As London except: 12.30pm Movies and Games and Videos (11137). 1.05 *Anglia News and Weather* (81738088). 2.40 *Film*. Carry on Screeching (36527332). 3.10 *Cartoon* (34040808). 5.00 *Anglia News and Weather* (56950).
- CHINA ASIA As London except: 12.30pm Movies and Games and Videos (11137). 1.05 *Westcountry News and Weather* (81738088). 2.40 *Film*. Baywatch (3047972). 3.30 *Cartoon* (36527332). 5.00 *Anglia News and Weather* (56950).
- CHINA ASIA ASIA As London except: 12.30pm Movies and Games and Videos (11137). 1.05 *Westcountry News and Weather* (81738088). 2.40 *Film*. Baywatch (3047972). 3.30 *Cartoon* (36527332). 5.00 *Anglia News and Weather* (56950).
- CHINA ASIA ASIA ASIA As London except: 12.30pm Movies and Games and Videos (11137). 1.05 *Westcountry News and Weather* (81738088). 2.40 *Film*. Baywatch (304797